THE Nation

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The Shape of Things

THE "DRAFT ROOSEVELT" FORCES LOOK TO Illinois, which holds its Presidential primary next week, for a landslide vote that will dispel any third-term doubts in the White House, but so far the Democratic Presidential primaries have revealed nothing we did not know before. The vote in Wisconsin, as earlier in New Hampshire, showed that the President could have the Democratic nomination if he wanted it, and it also showed that Mr. Garner commands a sizable minority in the party. Mr. Roosevelt is unopposed in Nebraska, where the primaries are being held as we go to press, and interest is concentrated on another fierce contest between Dewey and Vandenberg. If Dewey makes as good a showing as he did in Wisconsin, his chances for the G.O.P. nomination will be increased. If he polls a vote far ahead of his rivals in Illinois, it will be hard to take the nomination away from him. Roosevelt carried Illinois by 700,000 in 1936, and next week's primaries there will be regarded largely as a kind of trial heat between the two chief contenders before the big race. Another primary fight of some importance was staged in New York, where a split between the right and left wings of the Labor Party ended with the latter's victory in the city at least. Both sides were still claiming victory in the state.

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EVEN TWO SUCH STOUT COLUMNS AS THOSE of General Hugh Johnson and Miss Dorothy Thompson cannot offer Wendell Willkie adequate support for a Presidential candidacy. Indeed, he himself seems to be without illusions about the possibility, as McAlister Coleman points out in his article on page 469, although he is willing enough to accept the nomination if, by some miracle, it is offered him. Meanwhile, he is glad to hammer the New Deal wherever a platform is provided. Last week he made two speeches advocating a return to old-fashioned economic liberalism—a doctrine with uncomfortable implications for tariff-minded Republicans. Speaking to the Boston Chamber of Commerce, he accused the Administration of creating a "dark legend" about the morals of business, with the result that public confidence in the business man had been undermined and recovery inhibited. Mr. Willkie conceded that cases of dishonesty and abuses had occurred but protested that the government was killing the patient to cure the disease. His argument suggested a belief that a certain amount of buccaneering is inevitable if private enterprise is to function vigorously, and hence the task of government is to cover up, rather than expose, the lapses of business. Most defenders of private enterprise are so sanctimonious that this frankness makes a refreshing contrast. We are inclined to agree with Mr. Coleman that it is a pity Mr. Willkie hasn't a better chance for the Republican nomination. He has more ability and personality than any other anti-New Dealer in sight and would make an opponent worth fighting.

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MAYOR LAGUARDIA HAS SMEARED HIS OWN reputation for courage by his attempt to sidetrack the issues involved in the Bertrand Russell case. His action in cutting the vacant post at City College out of the budget for next year, which has yet to be approved, probably does not prevent the Board of Higher Education from appealing Judge McGeehan's scandalous decision. But it has had the effect of confusing the public and may also be regarded as an underhanded method of putting pressure on the board to abandon the whole matter. We would have more respect for the Mayor if he had placed himself squarely behind the religious bigots who are hounding Russell. As it is he stands self-convicted of moral cowardice. We note sadly that the New York *Times* has apparently placed itself in the same dock, for "the world's greatest newspaper" has yet to express itself editorially about this burning public controversy. In shining contrast is the nation-wide rally to Dr. Russell's defense of educators who realize, as Dr. Harry Carmen of Columbia has pointed out, that Judge McGeehan's decision opens the door "for pressure groups, with the aid of a court, to object to appointments on other grounds—economic, political, and intellectual." On another page we publish a letter from Ely Culbertson, who fears that the quality of education open to his children will suffer if the Russell case is allowed to become a prece-

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dent. Mr. Culbertson backs his protest with a check to aid the funds for defense, and it occurs to us that other parents might like to express their indignation in a similar way. All money received by *The Nation* will be forwarded to the Civil Liberties Union, which is handling Bertrand Russell's defense and has established a special fund for that purpose.

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THE LONG-PROMISED SPRING CLEANING OF the British government hardly seems worth the dust it has raised. A number of ministers have changed places, but the general aspect of the administration is little altered, and public anxiety about its efficiency is hardly allayed. It remains to be seen, however, whether Winston Churchill, who while remaining head of the navy also takes on the chairmanship of a committee of defense ministers, has really been given an opportunity to direct and coordinate general strategy or whether his new appointment is merely a piece of window-dressing. Apart from this the most hopeful change is the ousting of William S. Morrison, whose handling of the Ministry of Food had been severely criticized. The appointment as his successor of Lord Woolton is the single example of an infusion of new blood into the government. Woolton, formerly Frederick Marquis, is a Manchester business man known as an able and socially enlightened organizer.

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NEW COMPLICATIONS IN THE FAR EAST HAVE arisen in recent weeks as a result of the overshadowing effect of the European war. In extending the blockade to the Pacific, the Allies have risked possible entanglement with either the Soviet Union or Japan. Thus far the Soviets have shown no disposition to carry their protest against the Allied action beyond the note-writing stage, but Japan has threatened to use its navy, if necessary, to prevent undue interference with its shipping. Its stand appears to have checked, at least temporarily, the strong pro-Japanese drift in British foreign policy which many feared would lead to British recognition of the new Wang Ching-wei puppet regime. Following Hull's lead, Lord Halifax has announced that the British government will continue to recognize the Chinese government at Chungking. This statement has served to allay the doubts which were aroused a few days earlier by the speech of Ambassador Craigie stating that Britain and Japan "are ultimately striving for the same objective." Britain's attitude toward Chiang Kai-shek's regime will undoubtedly be influenced in the near future by the outcome of China's efforts to obtain increased Soviet assistance. But it will also be affected by any action, or lack of action, on the part of the United States in response to Japan's latest threat to American interests in the Far East.

SECRETARY HULL'S NOTE TO MEXICO ASKING for arbitration of the long-standing dispute over the Mexican confiscation of American-owned oil properties appears, on the surface, an innocuous document. It is mild and conciliatory in tone, and it carries no threat of retaliation in case the request is not honored. Actually, however, it is loaded with dynamite. Mexico is in the midst of a bitter political campaign. Although the oil question has not been one of the primary issues, General Almazán, the opposition candidate, who is believed to be financed by American interests, has attempted to make political capital out of Cárdenas's difficulties with the United States. In accentuating these difficulties at this moment, Secretary Hull has given birth to the suspicion that his note was deliberately timed to influence the election. As further grounds for this suspicion we have the known fact that Cárdenas has repeatedly maintained that the oil controversy was a domestic issue, not subject to arbitration. Secretary Hull must have known that his suggestion would be rejected. The question, then, is why he should have offered it at this particular moment. To make the situation worse, some of the news stories reporting the note pointed out that an unfavorable reply from Mexico might lead the Senate to pass the bill now before it repeals the Silver Purchase Act—a step which would have catastrophic effects on the Mexican economy.

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IT WAS A FOREGONE CONCLUSION THAT the Socialist Party, at its convention in Washington, would again nominate Norman Thomas as its candidate for President. It was also expected that the party would take a stand not only against American entry into the war but against steps "short of war" to aid the Allies. There was, however, a minority which urged that the extension of economic aid to England and France might hasten the defeat of Germany and make American military participation less likely. From a longer perspective, perhaps the most significant note was struck by Maynard Krueger when he said that "we Socialists want to see the conduct of the public's business enterprises at least one step removed from direct government control. Public ownership and operation of a business does not mean that it has to be completely centralized . . . it is even desirable that a substantial amount of competition be maintained among the various decentralized units of any industry organized by public enterprise." The Russian lesson was obviously very much in the air at the convention, as it is wherever Socialists gather these days.

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THANKS TO THE INTERVENTION OF LEWIS a transit strike in New York City was avoided and a last-minute compromise reached between the Mayor and the Transport Workers' Union. The compromise repre-

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sented a victory for the union since in effect it pledged the city's Board of Transportation to take over collective-bargaining contracts along with the private subway and elevated lines. The contracts themselves are still subject to judicial interpretation, but whether they are ever tested in court will depend on the good faith of the board and the good sense of the union. A test would certainly come if it became necessary to enforce the union-shop clause in the contracts. The union, which is powerfully organized, might find it wiser to leave an occasional stubborn dissident alone rather than risk an unfavorable court decision. If the LaGuardia administration wishes to bargain collectively with labor on the subway lines, there are no insuperable legal obstacles. If it does not wish to do so, it can find plenty of legal excuses for an anti-union policy. The Board of Transportation, in other cases, has argued before the courts that the operation of subway lines is "a proprietary, not a governmental function." We agree. And we believe that the Board of Transportation, like any other proprietor, ought to obey the law on collective bargaining.

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THE SUPREME COURT HAS NOW SUSTAINED, by refusing to review it, the excellent decision of the Third Circuit Court of Appeals which on November 8 of last year ordered Tom Girdler's Republic Steel Corporation to rehire the men involved in the strike of 1937 and pay them "lost" wages then estimated at $7,500,000; what the actual amount will be depends on the extent to which men have already been reinstated. In addition the company is ordered to withdraw recognition from the plan of employee representation and its successors at its Ohio plants, and to cease discouraging membership in the C. I. O. No doubt Republic Steel will continue to resist; its countersuit against the C. I. O. and its affiliates for $7,500,000 "damages" is still pending. The workers who died in the attempt to force Tom Girdler to observe the law cannot be "reinstated," but they have won at least a measure of retribution in this resounding victory for the union and the National Labor Board.

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IT IS HARD TO BE RESPECTFUL OF THE JUDGE who has just fined the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* $2,000 and sent two of its leading executives to jail for contempt of court. The jurist in question is Circuit Court Judge Thomas J. Rowe, and we suggest that he seems to be a fit subject for an investigation by the Missouri legislature. The *Post-Dispatch* case arises out of an indictment for extortion returned against a state Representative named Thomas M. ("Putty Nose") Brady and a deposed boss of the Moving Picture Operators' Union named John P. Nick. Brady was charged with having collected $10,000 from theater owners with whom Nick was trying to negotiate a wage increase. After Brady allegedly collected the $10,000, Nick decided wages were high enough. Judge Rowe dismissed the case against Nick without letting it proceed to trial of the facts and later suggested that the district attorney drop the charges against Brady. It may be that Nick and Brady are pure as driven snow, but other courts in Missouri do not seem to think so. Another circuit judge found that Nick received the $10,000 paid to Brady by the theater owners, and ordered Nick to hand over the money to the union. The St. Louis Court of Appeals has affirmed and the Missouri Supreme Court has refused to review still another court order ousting Nick from control of the union. Under the circumstances it is easy to understand why Ralph Coghlan wrote an editorial and Daniel R. Fitzpatrick drew a cartoon criticizing Judge Rowe.

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Dramatic Critic
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The War Spreads

THE flames of war have suddenly blazed up in Scandinavia and threaten to sweep over the rest of neutral Europe. Using the British action in mining Norwegian territorial waters as a pretext, Germany has invaded Denmark by land and water and attacked Norway. Denmark, with little more than paper defenses, has surrendered quietly and agreed to accept German "protection," but Norway, more favorably placed strategically and in a position to receive aid from the Allies, has declared that it is at war with Germany and is apparently resisting. As we go to press, news from the north is confused and incomplete, but Nazi landings are reported on the Norwegian coast as far north as Trondheim. If true, these mean that Germany was secretly transporting troops through Norwegian waters before the British navy moved in with its mines.

So far Sweden has not been attacked, but a full mobilization has been ordered and troops are being rushed tc the southern provinces. It seems unlikely that it can escape the fate of its neighbors, particularly as it offers the most practical route for the invasion of Norway. Moreover, there appear to be well-founded fears of aggressive German action against other neutrals. Reports have just come in of an ultimatum from Berlin to four Balkan powers demanding the right to police the Danube. An alleged British plot to block the river serves as an excuse. Belgium and Holland also seem to have been given cause for fresh alarm and are reinforcing their frontier defenses.

At this juncture it is rather futile to discuss who is responsible for spreading the war. Germany has violated international law from the outset and has persistently and with considerable success attempted to force the Scandinavian states to accept its own very unneutral interpretation of neutrality. But the Allies, too, have flouted legality on numerous occasions, even if they have not, as their enemy has, taken toll of neutral lives. The conduct of war according to a strict set of rules has never been much more than an ideal, and when one belligerent adopts the methods of totalitarian warfare, the other is not likely to handicap itself by sticking to higher standards. For their part in the newest development both sides will find justification in reasons of military expediency.

For months the Allies have been toying with the idea of establishing a northern flank. While the question of Allied aid to the Finns was still in the balance, Germany stepped in and warned the Scandinavian states against allowing the passage of any Allied troops to Finland. At that time, presumably, Berlin considered that the extension of the war in this region would be contrary to its interests. But the assumption behind that policy was that there would be no serious interference with its freedom to import iron ore and other supplies from Scandinavia. Thus the Allied decision to tighten the blockade in the north at all costs produced a new situation to which Hitler, as is his custom, swiftly adapted his strategy. If he is successful in overrunning the whole peninsula, possession of the Norwegian Atlantic coast will provide him with innumerable submarine and air bases permitting an intensification of the counter-blockade which would be extremely serious for the Allies. It is doubtful, however, whether this advantage would prove decisive, and against it must be set the disadvantages of damaging Scandinavia as a supply base. For instance, the occupation of Denmark means that that country will soon have no surplus of food to export to Germany, since its animal husbandry is almost entirely dependent on imported feed.

In any case it is unbelievable that the Allies will permit Germany to seize Norway without putting up a strenuous fight to gain control of the country themselves. It is difficult to see how a firm German hold can be established quickly unless the British fleet is driven off the coast. It will be necessary, however, for large numbers of Allied troops to be moved swiftly to Norway if the advantage gained by German initiative is to be offset. Once again Berlin seems to have scored over its slower opponents.

One factor of decisive importance will be the attitude of Russia, and the spread of war to the north provides something of a test of the declared Soviet policy of neutrality as between Germany and the Allies. If Stalin chose to turn the forces which he still has in the Petsamo region against northern Norway, he would furnish Germany important aid, since this would extend the necessary area of Allied operations, threaten the Swedish northern frontier, and put that country in a vise.

The Dies Offensive

MARTIN DIES'S spring offensive against democracy continues. Because his current victim is ostensibly the Communist Party, many people who ought to see the larger range of his attack remain apathetic. In Congress there is only silence. Three years ago people were saying that it was foolish to attack Martin Dies; he would "destroy himself." Now liberal Congressmen explain that it is dangerous to attack Martin Dies; he will destroy anyone who obstructs him.

Mr. Dies's newest subterfuge is shrewdly devised. He does not propose to ban the Communist Party. He asks only for its membership lists. The request seems innocent and plausible; when the Communists refuse to comply, the atmosphere of suspicion is heightened. In actuality the demand for the Communist Party's rolls is virtually a death warrant for the party. Mr. Dies knows this; he knows that publication of party membership would ex-

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pose thousands of Communists to economic reprisals, and would prevent almost any new recruitment. As the Civil Liberties Union has pointed out, any party has the right to protect its members from "exposure to contempt, prejudice, or antagonism." We hope that the courts will sustain this view. But to Martin Dies traditional democratic safeguards have never mattered. The methods his committee has employed in the last fortnight vividly reflect his contempt for minority rights. In Philadelphia, Boston, and Baltimore Communist headquarters have been raided, records seized. In Pittsburgh a party leader's home was searched. Sometimes Mr. Dies's agents use the formality of search warrants. Sometimes they ignore the formality. The point is incidental to their real objective.

And when Communists resist they are cited for contempt. Five have already been cited for refusing to tell all to the Dies committee; others face similar action. Mr. Dies does not propose to ban the Communist Party. He will decapitate it. Few voices have been heard in protest as the modern version of the Palmer raids proceeds. Isolated and courageous was the action of Federal Judge George A. Welsh, who ordered the arrest of two Dies committee raiders and a detective after their Philadelphia invasion. Expressing the hope that the Supreme Court would ultimately review the committee's actions, Judge Welsh pleaded that "we in this country do not sacrifice liberty on the altar of patriotism." He asked that Mr. Dies refrain from using the seized documents until the legality of the seizure had been established. Mr. Dies promptly inserted them into the record of the committee.

The issues raised by these developments go beyond the immediate legality of the raids or of the demand for the membership lists. Obviously the lists have no relevance to responsible investigation. Even Mr. Dies may have grown belatedly alarmed at his own excesses; his proposal for legislation to compel the publication of membership lists of "foreign-affiliated organizations" sounds like an afterthought designed to thwart criticism of what has already been done. Presumably the legislation would embrace the Socialist Party—affiliated to the Second International—and many peace societies with international ties, as well as the Communist Party. The definition of "foreign-affiliated" is nebulous. Mr. Dies's definitions always are. But the consequences of such a measure are clear. It would provide a "Who's Who" of American radicalism as future reference for employers and G-men. Less objectionable is the measure proposed by Congressman Voorhis, calling only for the registration of foreign-allied groups, without disclosure of their membership files. But liberals in Congress might profitably spend more time fighting Martin Dies on the crucial issue and less time cautiously striving to improve on his suggestions. That issue is the right of minority parties to function without interference and persecution unless they are guilty of criminal acts. Mr. Dies has exposed no such acts.

Once again the Administration is on a spot marked out by Dies. But its plight is partly of its own making. Mr. Dies now says that the President must declare himself categorically on the legislation proposed. If the answer is no, Mr. Dies will announce that the White House is shielding the Kremlin. If the answer is yes, he will have won a momentous victory in his crusade against civil rights. Again Mr. Dies can't lose. But the alternatives are partly the result of the Administration's failure to combat Dies resolutely when the anti-red fever was lower. Now defense of civil rights, where Communists are involved, has become politically precarious.

Nevertheless the vicious circle must be broken somewhere. The Administration has tried the silent treatment, and it has failed. There still remains a wide, if inarticulate, body of sentiment that could be rallied now by forthright action. In Boston and Philadelphia leading citizens have protested against the Dies invasion. There are many people in the country who dread the approach of a new Palmer era, and see Dies as its forerunner. They recognize that the Dies committee is a deadlier peril to the republic than all of the menaces and pseudo-menaces it has exposed. Mr. Roosevelt could crystallize this feeling by bluntly saying no to Martin Dies and announcing that democracy can still afford to let freedom ring.

Pickpockets, Inc.

IT IS hard to keep a straight face, even in Wall Street, on hearing some of the horrified protests now rising against the new Wagner-Lea investment-trust bill. It may be that this is another underhanded attempt by subversive influences to discourage that freedom of investment thought necessary for recovery. But there are simpler explanations. After 1927 there was a mushroom growth of investment trusts of various kinds. From 1927 until 1935 a total of $7,000,000,000 was invested in them. Some 4,500,000 Americans handed over part or all of their savings to these trusts on the assurance that they would thus enjoy expert guidance and larger incomes. During that period the presumed master-minds of finance managing these companies succeeded in losing or looting more than a third of the capital intrusted to them. The average return paid the investor was less than 3 per cent, and in the case of the so-called management investment trusts, less than 2 per cent. To put it in another way, a business so risky that more than a third of the capital invested in it was lost paid smaller returns than could have been obtained in government bonds.

Investors lost almost $3,000,000,000 in these investment trusts, but in many cases wily promoters enriched themselves. The story of the United Founders group of

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investment trusts is illustrative. This group started in 1922 with a cash investment of only $500. It had $500,000,000 intrusted to it by November, 1929. By November, 1935, this sum had shrunk to $50,000,000. Virtually 90 per cent of the money invested had been lost. But the promoters fattened on catastrophe. According to the facts uncovered by the SEC investigation of investment trusts, C. Foster Coombs, one of the four original promoters of United Founders, had made $30,000,000 in 1929 in cash and securities from his enterprise. United Founders was a group of interlocking investment companies, and within this complex financial organism many strange things could occur. For the three-year period 1928 to 1930, the United Founders group reported total net investment profits of approximately $43,300,000. Not one penny of it was real. On the contrary, according to the SEC report, this "profit" actually hid a loss of $3,300,000. The loss had been covered and the "profit" created by intercompany transactions.

Section 30 of the Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 instructed the SEC to investigate investment trusts, and we can do no more at this time than indicate the nature of the findings in the voluminous reports it has been making on the subject. While a considerable number of investment trusts are conservatively and honestly managed and have good financial records, a great many have differed only in complexity from ordinary swindling. It has proved hard even to punish those responsible, much less provide restitution. Alfred A. Cook, counsel for the trustee of Continental Securities Company, told the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency during the hearings on the Wagner-Lea bill of the experience of that bankrupt investment company. In 1937 and 1938 "a group of plunderers" stripped Continental's investment portfolio of everything except $50,000 worth of securities. The loss to investors was $3,250,000, and although several of the company's officers were tried for larcency, all were acquitted.

The Nation is not prepared to indorse every provision of the Wagner-Lea bill, either as regards investment trusts or investment counselors. The bill seems, if anything, a mild measure dependent for its effectiveness on a militant SEC. But the main principles embodied in it seem to us essential if investors are to have some degree of safety in the future. It seeks to eliminate the corporate devices by which the investor has so often been plundered by the promoter. It would end the conflict of interests that made investment companies a source of profit to their directors. It provides for strict supervision of the accounting methods which have made it possible in the past to hide the true condition of investment companies and the true nature of transactions in which they were engaged. The practice of starting an investment company on a shoestring and a glib tongue would be ended. One provision would require an investment of $100,000 to organize an investment company. Another would limit its size to $150,000,000 in assets. We cannot believe that these provisions would interfere with any legitimate business practices. And unlike some people in Wall Street, we do not have so low an opinion of the capitalist system as to believe that it will be fatally undermined if investment bankers are not permitted to pick pockets.

Caribbean Refuge

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

I TRAVELED in one of the cars that took the first three settlers to Sosua, the new refugee colony in the Dominican Republic. We left Santiago de los Caballeros, chief town of northern Santo Domingo, soon after breakfast. In the party were Mr. Perlstein, manager of Sosua; a married couple, young doctors from Vienna, named Klinger; a still younger secretary, Miss Dannenberg; an official of the Dominican Department of Agriculture assigned to be our supervisor and guide; my husband and myself. The doctors and Miss Dannenberg had lived as refugees in Trujillo City for more than a year and had been selected as members of the resident staff at Sosua. In the cars were also the luggage of the three settlers, a few staples with which to begin housekeeping, lunch for everybody, and a cat. The cat was an important member of the party and a prospective colonist, though a Dominican rather than a refugee.

The road from Santiago was good part way, very rough toward the end of the trip. But as the road grew worse, the country became more and more beautiful. Green mountains and fertile valleys showed that rainfall was plentiful. The small plantations along the way were fairly comfortable; children and animals looked healthy. The people of this region are prevailingly light brown, lighter than in the southern part of the country. Several Dominicans had mentioned this to us with special emphasis as if its slightly smaller proportion of Negro blood was evidence of superior qualities in the population of the north.

We drove about three hours. Then, suddenly, as we rounded a shoulder of a high ridge, the land fell off toward the sea, and Sosua lay below us. We first saw the

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beach, white and sleek, bending around the green-blue water of the bay. Then we saw hills and pastures reaching down to the shore, and a collection of red roofs. The two Austrian doctors, our fellow-passengers, looked for the first time at the land that was to be their home, perhaps for the rest of their lives.

Sosua is a tract of land of more than 26,000 acres lying on the coast of Santo Domingo about eleven road miles from Puerta Plata, the principal port on the north side of the island. About 5,000 acres are rolling, cultivated pasture, and the rest is hilly country grown over with brush or tall timber. The land is well watered; the soil will grow a number of crops—fruits and vegetables for the settlers (mangos, avocados, bananas, plantains, oranges are now growing wild), and yucca and tobacco, cacao and coffee for sale. There is good pasture for cows. Mahogany and other valuable timber grow in the forests. Near the shore, placed among trees, stand some thirty houses, white with red roofs, well built and well kept. The largest will be the office and community center of the settlement. The others will shelter the first batch of settlers—150 to 200 people. Water is piped to the houses; they have electricity supplied by a small plant on the place.

Land and houses belonged originally to the United Fruit Company. The property was abandoned as a banana plantation about fifteen years ago, and only two years ago was bought by President Trujillo, who has kept it up as a private estate.

When the Intergovernmental Committee for Political Refugees was set up after the Evian conference, only one country answered its appeal with a generous, unqualified offer of asylum. That country was the Dominican Republic, better known in the past for the exiles it has turned out than for hospitality to victims of persecution. The representatives of Trujillo in London offered on behalf of his government to take up to 100,000 European refugees as colonists. No conditions were made except that the settlers should be carefully selected; the country needs farmers and skilled workers and a few professional people and technicians.

Trujillo's offer was examined and checked by several refugee groups, including representatives of the President's Advisory Committee. Every one approved the project, and the Dominican Republic Settlement Association was founded to make a final survey of the possibilities and then to undertake the actual establishment and financing of the colony. James N. Rosenberg is the president of the association and Joseph A. Rosen its vice-president. Dr. Rosen, an agronomist, was for years the operating head of "'Agrojoint," which settled 300,000 Jews on 3,000,000 acres of land in the Crimea between 1922 and 1936. Mr. Rosenberg was chairman of the board of that great enterprise. Both know the problems of large-scale colonizing.

For two months this past winter Dr. Rosen studied the possibilities in the Dominican Republic. The Settlement Association was given the choice of several good tracts of agricultural land for the first colony, and all were explored by Dr. Rosen and his assistants. He finally selected Sosua as the most suitable. From a strictly agricultural point of view, one or two other areas were better. But in the qualities that go to make a successful colony—fertility, existing facilities such as houses and electricity and a good water supply, variety of soil and altitude, healthful climate, a deep-water anchorage, and, not least, natural beauty and a delightful bathing beach —Sosua led all the rest.

The next steps were political. Mr. Rosenberg set out for the Dominican Republic with an impressive delegation which included representatives of the Department of State and of the Intergovernmental Committee. They too examined and approved the selected site; within two weeks a contract was signed between the Dominican government and the Settlement Association providing for the immediate admission of 500 refugee families. More generous terms could hardly be imagined. The settlers will come in without paying the customary $500 entry fee; they are guaranteed freedom from discrimination or persecution; they may bring in personal possessions and equipment duty free; the property of the association is not subject to taxation. When the contract was ratified, Generalissimo Trujillo made over his Sosua estate as a gift to the Settlement Association. Exactly thirty days after the contract was ratified we drove to Sosua with the first members of the settlement's staff.

When we stopped at the door of the large, fine community house the cat jumped out first. He went to work inspecting his new quarters, avoiding the hearty welcome of a large police dog. The rest of us walked up the steps and through the rooms. They are furnished handsomely, if a little solemnly, with Dominican mahogany—large pieces, manufactured in the country. The further side of the house opens on a wide porch. Two low columns flank the steps. On each, when we stepped out, stood a peacock spreading its tail in the sun. Beyond were fruit trees, a rough pasture, then low cliffs and the blue sea, with blue mountains across the bay.

Caretakers were in the house, and, together with the new arrivals, they produced lunch on the porch—a good lunch, with wine to celebrate the occasion. We drank to Sosua, and everybody felt pleased and excited. No one spoke of the days of terror that stretched out behind; the sunny peace of the present was enough for that hour.

Some 500 families will be settled at Sosua. The association plans to bring them in gradually, as accommodations are made ready and suitable colonists are selected

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and money for their transportation and settlement is raised. Some of the refugees will be taken directly out of Germany; some will come from camps in Norway and Sweden and Holland. Trained young men and women will be sought as the first settlers. Ultimately it is planned to give each family an individual homestead of eight or ten acres, though the major crops will be raised and marketed collectively.

If the colony at Sosua is a success, more land will be secured and other settlements started. The beginning at Sosua looks small compared with the total problem—a few hundred families out of millions. But what Trujillo has done other governments can do. The example of the Dominican Republic has already had an effect, and negotiations are under way in a dozen different countries for the settlement of both German and Spanish refugees.

Why has Trujillo opened his country to the persecuted victims of dictatorship in Europe? Why has he given a huge and valuable tract of his own land as a haven for the exiles? Why does he show no concern over the introduction into his tight little dictatorship of some 2,000 Spanish republicans, every one a political exile?

I asked these questions myself before I went to Santo Domingo, and after I came away everyone I met asked me. The answers are not difficult to give as soon as one recognizes the wide differences between dictatorships in Latin America and in Europe.

Trujillo is not a fascist. During the Spanish war he even supported the Loyalists. Like every other dictator in the countries to the south of us, he describes his state as a republic. In so far as they do not inconvenience him, the forms of democracy are observed. (The Dominican Senate and Chamber of Deputies ratified the contract with the Settlement Association.) Trujillo is purely a personal dictator, unhampered by ideology. He does what he pleases. In ten years of absolute rule he has made himself enormously rich. Political opponents have been imprisoned or exiled or killed. He has taken their lands and other properties for such uses as he saw fit. He has given wealth and jobs to his relatives and chief supporters. Two and a half years ago, as *Nation* readers will remember, Trujillo's troops massacred many thousands of Haitians living in the northern part of the country. These people were poor, landless black men and women who had come into Santo Domingo to work on the sugar plantations and had settled down inside the frontier.

On the face of it, this record would seem to offer rather meager security to refugees from other tyrannies in Europe. But it is not wise to go merely by the record. Trujillo can be magnanimous when he happens to feel like it; and he can be a statesman. He has used his power to build up his country as well as himself. The country needs settlers; it is rich and undeveloped. Above everything else Trujillo desires to make it a "white" republic. The obsession with color in Santo Domingo dominates every upper-class mind. White or near-white workers are held to be vastly superior to the obviously colored ones. And Haitians, in their own country or in Santo Domingo, are looked upon with fear and abhorrence. The massacre was only mentioned by Dominicans twice in my hearing; both times it was spoken of as "the incident" and dismissed as of little consequence.

The Dominican Republic and Trujillo, its dictator, want white settlers. Ironically, the bitter race prejudice in the little Caribbean republic creates a haven for victims of a different race prejudice in the Reich. Jews are white, they are Europeans; they will bring in energy and higher standards of life and better ways of doing things. They will mingle, eventually, with the population, increasing the precious proportion of white blood. The same reasoning applies to Spaniards, about 2,000 of whom have come to the Dominican Republic. I asked a Spanish refugee in Trujillo City why the Dictator allowed Spanish radicals to come to Santo Domingo. He smiled without any rancor and said, "We are white and we can breed. That is enough." Not even political radicalism outweighs these considerations.

Several other minor considerations raise the stock of the refugees in the eyes of Dominicans. One is financial. The colonists imported by the association will bring money into the country. It is estimated that the cost of transporting and settling a family will be about $1,000. A substantial part of this will of course be spent in Santo Domingo. A second consideration is the prestige such a colony will bring to Trujillo and to the country. His standing will be raised in the eyes of other nations; President Roosevelt and the United States State Department, who at least disapproved of the slaughter of the Haitians, can be expected to look with more favor on Trujillo in his role as savior of the refugees. A third consideration is linked to the second: Trujillo naturally resents American control of Dominican customs, and so of its finances. He also resents the special preferences granted to Cuban sugar. A group of influential Americans, like those sponsoring the Settlement Association, will have an interest in promoting Dominican rights and Dominican prosperity in Washington.

These motives are neither better nor worse than the motives of most governments. Their very selfishness is a fair guaranty that Trujillo's promises will be kept. The refugees, especially those who come in under the wing of the Dominican Republic Settlement Association, stand a good chance of peace and happiness—at least as long as Trujillo holds power. And interested persons in all countries will watch with close attention to see how the Dominican government carries out the terms of its own agreement.

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Men Who Would Be President

IV. WENDELL WILLKIE'S HAT IS ON HIS HEAD

BY McALISTER COLEMAN

OLD IRON PANTS was in fine fettle on the afternoon of November 20, 1939. The best-known American cavalryman since George Armstrong Custer was killed by the Indians was riding high at the luncheon of the Bond Club of New York at the Bankers' Club at the top of the Equitable Life Building around the corner from J. P. Morgan. General Hugh Johnson had galloped through his prepared speech and was now answering questions about possible Presidential candidates on the Republican ticket. He shied a bit when the name of one of the most prominent members of the Bankers' Club came up, saying something about Tom Dewey's lack of experience. And then a bond-peddler shouted, "What about Wendell Willkie?" and the General charged. Iron Pants then and there nominated Wendell Lewis Willkie, president of the Commonwealth and Southern Corporation, for President of these United States. The following week Arthur Krock of the New York *Times,* who had been restrainedly boosting Mr. Willkie for the past two years, seconded the General's nomination in his column, and the Wendell Willkie boom got under way.

Let's make it plain at the start that Mr. Willkie does not take this business too seriously. To newspapermen who reached him at Atlanta, Georgia, on the night of General Johnson's nominating speech, he said jocosely, "In view of the speed with which the federal government is taking over my business, I'll probably have to be looking for a new job shortly. General Johnson's is the best offer I've had thus far." To the writer he said the other day, "I know I am not going to be nominated for President. I have no ambition to be nominated for President. I have, however, been very anxious to put over certain ideas and have written and spoken of these ideas. Because of that, some people have suggested that I should be a candidate for President. I do not take this talk seriously. Several people have asked me whether, if I were nominated, I would accept. In order to preserve my intellectual integrity I have said yes, if it were on a platform in which I believed. I have, however, consistently refused many offers of financial help, all offers to seek delegates, and any kind of political assistance."

Mr. Willkie has been around. He knows that the president of an electric-utility holding company, indorsed by ex-cavalry generals, *Times* columnists, and hate-happy bond salesmen, bankers, and insurance men would somehow lack a popular appeal. So bowing to Mr. Willkie's good sense, we'll drop the Presidential-possibility talk and stick to the president of the Commonwealth and Southern and his views, who and which, in all conscience, are interesting enough.

Since 1933, when geography and his natural ability set him down in the Tennessee Valley as the top man of the privately owned electric utilities of those parts, he has been conducting a raucous, bitter-end warfare against the New Deal and all its works—especially its works in concrete and mortar—that has won him the grudging admiration of even the most starry-eyed New Dealers. And as for the haters of That Man, they are near to tears as they read under their exorbitantly priced electric lights the latest Willkie summons to rebel against the brutality of governmental attempts to supply cheap and abundant power to the underlying population. To be sure, some of the language of liberalism which Mr. Willkie employs in the *Saturday Evening Post,* the Hearst syndicated articles, the *Atlantic Monthly,* and the *New Republic* seems a bit far-fetched to his most devoted followers. What have civil liberties, the democratic process, and free enterprise got to do with pouring it into That Man? But on second thought Mr. Willkie is quickly forgiven for these liberal lapses, in view of the magnificent manner in which he stands up there and swaps blow for blow with the White House.

This is not to imply that all New Deal haters approve the Willkie tactics of howling to high heaven via radio and rostrum, newspaper and magazine. There are those in his own industry who wish that Wendell would be less articulate. However, none of this internal muttering ruffles one dark-brown hair in Mr. Willkie's abundant crop. He knows well enough that the tactics of the holding-company executives of the twenties made them and their pyramided monstrosities a stench in the noses of all decent Americans. Mr. Willkie wasn't around when Sam Insull was setting up the "Super-Power Poison Squad," as the People's Legislative Service called the National Electric Light Association. He wasn't there when Merlin Aylesworth made his famous remark at a convention of the N. E. L. A.: "Don't mind the expenses. The public pays." As a matter of fact, when the private-utility skulduggery was at its height, Mr. Willkie was practicing law in Akron, Ohio, defending, among others, rubber workers whose civil liberties had been violated.

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It is said of Mr. Willkie that he is a "depression success." And it is said, invidiously, that it was just the Willkie good luck that he didn't appear on the utility scene until after the Big Blow of 1929. This is unfair. He never would have ridden with the old "kilowatt klan." His inheritance of a long tradition of genuine liberalism, his early democratic training in the little town of Elwood, Indiana, where he heard his father and mother, both lawyers and both liberals, talk progressive politics with Henry Georgites, La Follette men, and Socialists—this conditioning would have kept him clear of the holding-company hi-jackers of the twenties. It's against the Willkie grain to whisper in the dark. He is happiest when he is up on a platform tearing his expensive shirt over the way the government is manhandling free enterprise.

No master of irony could have devised a better plot sequence than the one which just the other day landed this small-town, big-framed Hoosier in a director's chair in Mr. Morgan's pet bank, the First National, still talking an indigenous American liberalism.

Elwood, where Mr. Willkie was born in 1892, was then a town of some 10,000 population. It is in the natural-gas belt. It had its normal quota of rebel spirits who gathered at the home of Circuit Court Judge Willkie, Wendell's father, and enjoyed hearing the Judge, and later on the Judge's son back from the Culver Military Academy, tear into the trusts. When Wendell went to Indiana University, he soon became known as one of the leaders of the campus radicals. Paul McNutt, who went to the university a few months ahead of Willkie, was already careering. The future self-anointed candidate for the Presidency on the Democratic ticket was up to his handsome eyebrows in college politics on the conservative side of the fence. Though Willkie and his rebel roughnecks were mildly derisive of the way McNutt pushed himself to the head of every organization from the presidency of his class to leading man in the university dramatic society, they were shrewd enough to figure that the McNutt formula of self-promotion couldn't very well fail in a world where most men prefer sitting around swapping stories, drinking beer, or playing games to collecting prospective constituents. When Willkie and McNutt were graduated in 1913, it was the latter whom most people picked as the more likely to succeed. Willkie was an able youngster, but a bit wild in his views, such as those on the abolition of inherited fortunes.

Willkie spent a year at Oberlin and was admitted to the bar in 1916. Big, good-natured, laughter-loving, and a horse for work, he made friends and obtained clients easily, and pretty soon the Akron law firm of Mather, Nesbitt, and Willkie was handling important electric-utility and railroad litigation in the rubber town. After representing a future Midwest subsidiary of the far-flung Commonwealth and Southern, Willkie became associated with Judge John C. Weadock, and in 1929 Weadock and Willkie became chief counsel for C. and S.

The year 1929 is an important one in utility history, for on January 7 of that year there was filed with the Secretary of State of Delaware the certificate of incorporation of the United Corporation. The formation of that holding company marked the entrance of the banking house of J. P. Morgan and Company into the power field, telling the world that the electric-power industry had reached full financial maturity. It was the announced intention of the House of Morgan and its ally, Bonbright and Company, to foster "closer relations among the great public-utility systems in the East"—or, in less fancy language, to buy controlling interest in operating companies in the center of the heaviest electrical traffic in the country, where rates to small consumers were frozen at monopolistic levels. Through the mystic technique of share-for-share swappings United acquired the important stock of the United Gas Improvement Company of Philadelphia and the Public Service Corporation of New Jersey, the latter monopolizing the gas, electric, and transportation facilities of the Garden State. It was in the course of these involved transactions that Mr. Morgan and his partners, as was revealed at the Pecora hearings, thought up the chummy idea of issuing United shares to a preferred list of friends, financial writers, and deserving politicians at prices less than were charged to the public later on.

On May 23, 1929, Commonwealth and Southern was formed to combine the properties of three holding companies—Commonwealth Power Corporation, Penn-Ohio Edison Company, and Southeastern Power Company. United subscribed for 22.2 per cent of the shares and warrants of the C. and S., and U. G. I. subscribed for an additional 11.1 per cent. The Niagara-Hudson Power Corporation next entered United's domain and then the Columbia Gas and Electric. But by this time the deepening depression halted further extensions of United. Just how all this handing around of paper contributed either to the needed integration of electric facilities or to the national economy as a whole Mr. Willkie, who doesn't like any references to the Morganatic origins of his company, may be left to explain. That it did, however, contribute to the joint coffers of Morgan and Bonbright is evidenced by the fact that in June, 1933, the total profit realized by Morgan as promoter of the United was $19,200,000 (not including the take of the individual partners) and that Bonbright cleaned up $24,850,000.

In 1933, the same year that the United stopped swapping, Mr. Willkie was elected president of the C. and S. to succeed B. C. Cobb. He headed a $1,128,501,778 system of electric companies sprawled over the map from Michigan to Mississippi.

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A short four months after the big-muscled lawyer had settled down at the president's desk, he let out a howl whose reverberations have rung round the country with increasing volume ever since. For in May, 1933, the Seventy-third Congress of the United States created the Tennessee Valley Authority "for the purpose of maintaining and operating the properties now owned by the United States in the vicinity of Muscle Shoals, Alabama, in the interest of the national defense and for agricultural and industrial development and to improve navigation in the Tennessee River and to control the destructive flood waters in the Tennessee River and Mississippi River basins." To this end the Authority was commissioned to construct dams and reservoirs, to manufacture and sell fertilizer at Muscle Shoals, and to produce, distribute, and sell electric power. It was, of course, this last which brought the full-lunged rebel yell to Mr. Willkie's lips.

The troublesome dichotomy which runs through all Mr. Willkie's speeches and writings now appeared in full public view. As a liberal, the former follower of the elder La Follette could hardly object to any steps which would alleviate the wretched lot of the poor people of the valley. Cheap fertilizer, checking of soil erosion, flood control—all to the good. But cheap power? At Birmingham, after a year of TVA, Mr. Willkie approved the industrial-expansion program of the Authority but decidedly did not approve the Lilienthal allocation of 52 per cent of total costs to power production. At White Sulphur Springs, at a convention of investment brokers, he first sounded the ruination note. He predicted that if someone didn't do something quick, TVA would ruin the private utilities. A year later he was taking in more territory by saying that "the utilities are the first industry to stand against the socialization of all industry."

At the outset the difficulty with Mr. Willkie's case was that it wouldn't stand up in the court of public opinion. When TVA and Mr. Willkie arrived almost simultaneously in the valley, the four big operating companies now gathered under the aegis of the C. and S. were doing the usual private-utility job of taking off the cream in the cities and letting the farms go dark. Wendell Willkie, the liberal, knew well enough that here was a normal functioning of any private monopoly of public resources. No one needed to tell him how rarely farmers outside Elwood, Indiana, for example, would get their mail if the Post Office were in private hands. But Wendell Willkie, president of the C. and S., looking with atrabilious eyes at the drop in utility stocks which followed the announcement of the TVA's minimum rate to farmers of 75 cents a month, got hot. When TVA rates to the cities and small towns, beginning at the much-fought-over Tupelo, came down to those charged by the publicly owned Ontario Hydro and the municipal power companies of the Pacific Coast, Mr. Willkie got hotter.

It is significant that the first groups to recover from the effects of Mr. Willkie's oratory were his own customers in the valley. When Chattanooga, for instance, got a chance to vote for TVA power in 1935, it did so, three to one. C. and S. sent $20,000 to the Chattanooga Citizens' and Taxpayers' Association, which had sprung to arms in defense of the Tennessee Electric Power Company, a Commonwealth subsidiary. The association bought itself a newspaper to offset George Fort Milton's courageous editorials in behalf of TVA in the Chattanooga *News*, and in addition saw to it that advertisers boycotted the *News*. It also informed the voters that teachers' salaries would be cut if TVA won the election, wept for widowed and orphaned stockholders, and dished out all the hoary anti-public-ownership scare stories. All to no avail. Though the methods employed by Mr. Willkie in this and other elections throughout the valley indicate that at times his play is rougher than it is fair, no one can accuse him of lack of frankness. When a Congressional committee found out about that $20,000, the only comment made by the president of the C. and S. was that he was sorry that it wasn't more.

Wendell Willkie

Pretty soon Mr. Willkie had persuaded himself that he was being persecuted by a governmental tyranny animated by the personal venom of the President of the United States. At a speech at the Town Hall Club in New York in 1935 he spoke of Roosevelt as "a member of the rentier class with money made in the speculative days of the railroads." The most famous peace conference which Mr. Willkie held with the President was in the fall of 1937, and as a result of that two-hour session both conferees issued sharp press releases which only served to widen the breach between them. In the President's version, Mr. Roosevelt had wondered what prevented Mr. Willkie from financing his Midwest companies, which were far removed from the TVA. Mr. Willkie, according to the President, had replied, "the general feeling," meaning the general feeling of uneasiness on the part of potential investors in utility stocks. The President had been amused at this. In Mr. Willkie's release on the peace pow-wow, he said that

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he had offered to accept the Administration's theory of "prudent investment" as a basis of valuation for rate-making purposes and to eliminate some of the "writing up" of which the holding companies were accused if the government would allow the holding companies to preserve their status quo.

Though every financial statement of the Commonwealth and Southern showed a neat profit—in 1937 it was more than $15,000,000—Mr. Willkie finally threw up his hands and announced that he would sell the properties of his company in Tennessee to the TVA. David Lilienthal had taken literally Jonathan Daniels's remark that "the South was sick of the dark" and was selling electric light at a price that bore some relation to the cost of generation and transmission. Unlike Mr. Willkie he didn't have to worry about widows and orphans, the ups and downs of the stock market, the fantastic salaries of executives, or advertising appropriations for friendly newspapers. When, last August, Mr. Lilienthal handed Mr. Willkie a check for $44,728,300, with more to come, the latter said, "This sure is a lot of money for a couple of Indiana farmers to be kicking around."

Homespun talk of this sort disarms Mr. Willkie's bitterest critics. No matter what you think of his views, you can't help liking the man, and always there is the thought that if he hadn't been counsel for the defense of so vulnerable an institution as the holding company, old-fashioned American liberalism would have had in him a doughty champion. Of course it just doesn't make sense for Mr. Willkie to shed tears over what he calls "the free-enterprise system" when he is head of a system which symbolizes monopoly in its crudest form.

Although Mr. Willike and his admirers profess to see no chance of his being nominated for the Presidency, he has of late been engaged in hammering out what might seem to an innocent bystander a fairly comprehensive platform, just in case. Arthur Krock, in a recent column commenting on an article of Mr. Willkie's in *Fortune,* wrote, "He made the best analysis of the case against the New Deal which has come to the notice of this correspondent, and therefore would be the clearest campaign leader against it." And though Mr. Krock hastened to add that his man "probably cannot be nominated by the Republicans," it is interesting to note that Mr. Willkie in that same *Fortune* article tackled the subject of this country's foreign policy.

The headings of his many articles indicate the general Willkie thesis. Idle Money—Idle Men, published in the *Saturday Evening Post* of June 17, 1939, explains that "government regulation, government competition, and government discouragement of investment are the three elements that compose the fear which dominates the business man and the investor today." When the people are stirred sufficiently to "force the government to abandon those hostile policies" we shall put both idle men and idle money to work once more. Brace Up America! in the *Atlantic Monthly* for June, 1939, says in summation, "We do not need to rescind any of the laws regulating industry; but we need to amend them so as to encourage new enterprises which can absorb our idle money and our idle men." This, says Mr. Willkie, is "a program for the assertion of one more of our neglected liberties—that of free enterprise—with the same vigor as we assert our liberties of speech, of press, and of religious worship." In Fair Trial, in the *New Republic,* he returns to the subject of civil liberties for free enterprise and says, "It is well to remember that any man who denies justice to someone he hates prepares the way for a denial of justice to someone he loves." This was a rehash of the love-and-hate theme he developed in the *Saturday Evening Post* under the heading With Malice Toward None. In that emotional piece Mr. Willkie said that after being pestered by regulatory boards in Washington he liked to drive around the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, and the home of Robert E. Lee, thinking the while how those three men would have treated the utilities with love in their hearts instead of hate.

In a recent speech at Toledo Mr. Willkie said that things have got so bad that the government now occupies the position which some people thought industry held in the twenties. "Not even a totalitarian state," he cried, "has more financial powers than those exercised by the present Administration." The *Fortune* foreign-policy essay was easier on the Administration in that it indorsed the reciprocal trade agreements. Mr. Willkie, however, does not think the Administration was consistent in lending money to Finland with restrictions against its use for war materials. He would furnish military supplies to all nations attacked by an "aggressor."

Mr. Willkie enjoys the distinction of being a literate person fallen among utility men. He prefers reading to golf and cocktail parties, especially reading English history. He recently wrote a scholarly review of a biography of the young Melbourne and is at work reviewing a life of the elder Pitt. In a way, like Miniver Cheevy, he was "born too late." He would have been an adornment to the British Liberal Party when that organization was more than Lloyd George and wind. Then he could have agitated for the widening of the democratic processes and the reform of the poor laws, haunted neither by specters of holding companies nor by the smiling countenance of Jerome Frank of the SEC.

Still, it's too bad that he doesn't take seriously this running for you know what. There is more fire and go in the man than in the whole colorless smear of Deweys, Tafts, and Vandenbergs. But we promised not to talk about that.

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Writers in the Wilderness

III. KATHERINE ANNE PORTER

BY MARGARET MARSHALL

IT IS related that when Daniel Boone discovered smoke rising from a cabin only a hundred miles from his own he pulled up stakes and moved on because he didn't like being crowded. His great-great-great-great-granddaughter Katherine Anne Porter also admits to what seems to be a congenital need for "elbow room," both as human being and as artist. Writing of herself in "Authors Today and Yesterday," she says:

> All my intense growing years were lived completely outside of literary centers; I knew no other writers, and I had no one to consult with on the single vital issue of my life. This self-imposed isolation, which seems to have been almost unconscious on my part, a natural way of living, prolonged and made more difficult my discipline as an artist. But it saved me from discipleship, personal influences, and membership in groups.

Like her forbear Miss Porter has blazed her own trails and lighted her own fires, and if I may press the analogy so far, has made a clearing in the wilderness from which rises a solitary smoke.

Miss Porter was born in 1894 in central Texas, which happened to be trail's end for one branch of a family which has been wholly American since 1775 and in some of its ramifications since 1680. Before it was American it was Scotch, Irish, English, Welsh, Dutch, with a dash of French and Spanish. I am told that a documented history of half a dozen of its branches would trace quite accurately the history of the country, its land-seeking migrations, its political, economic, social, and even religious permutations—for whereas Daniel Boone had a Pennsylvania Quaker childhood, Miss Porter's background is Southern Catholic. Her name family has been in the South since 1775. In that year a remote grandfather Porter settled in Bowling Green, Kentucky, having come from Pennsylvania. Others settled in Tennessee "and set up little academies in the wilderness." They settled, too, in Louisiana and in South Carolina. It was Miss Porter's grandparents who went to Texas, where they joined a community of Kentuckians.

The "little academies in the wilderness" indicate that these were pioneers who carried a cultural pack along with their desire for more and better land. And this fact has its bearing. The household into which Miss Porter was born was one of a long connected line of households imbedded in America, one shoot of a vine far-spreading but firmly rooted in the American past; it also had what must have been a rather extensive library, ranging from the classics in old translations, through Shakespeare, the eighteenth-century novelists, Pope, Swift, Dr. Johnson, including the "Lives," Rabelais, Voltaire, the Brontës, Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray.

We may assume therefore a sense of permanence and continuity despite wanderings, and an atmosphere in which writing and reading did not seem alien, in which culture was not a highfalutin word but a known and accepted part of life. I do not mean to imply that these two factors had anything primary to do with making a writer; but certainly they affected the air and soil in which a particular talent developed. The world of literature was at hand to be discovered by that first fine passion for reading that is often thwarted for lack of books or wasted on the haphazard and meager bookshelf of the average household in a country where getting and spending is both work and pastime and where books are largely extraneous to the prevailing way of life. Miss Porter had absorbed at fifteen what many another only begins to know exists at a later age, even though her intense growing years were lived outside of literary centers. Shakespeare's sonnets were reality for her at fourteen. At fifteen or so she read the Russian novelists; at about the same time she was imitating Laurence Sterne in the course of what she says was for years almost a secret apprenticeship to a craft. Some time later she came upon Yeats, Joyce, Pound, Eliot. Writing in the *Partisan Review* last summer, she said that she could write an autobiography based on her reading until she was twenty-five, a statement which reflects the intensity of an early life spent in isolation, to be sure, but an isolation peculiarly rich in nourishment and stimulation. This secret interior life seems to have been more real than the real world. And as so often happens in the case of the imaginative, in-turning individual, her actual experience, though it included marriage, divorce and remarriage, jobs, an almost fatal illness, and much moving about, remained external and peripheral. Looking back, she observes that her knowledge of the world she lived in developed very slowly. And we may be sure that the process was one of instinctive absorption rather than of conscious frontal attack; every one of her stories testifies to that.

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Miss Porter spent her childhood in Texas and Louisiana. She received what little formal education she had at small Southern schools for girls. It was scant and fragmentary, however, because she was a traveler from an early age. She has lived in New Orleans, Chicago, Bermuda, Mexico City, New York, Berlin. She spent considerable time in Paris after she received a Guggenheim fellowship in 1931. Only the writing, the interior life, was constant. In the article quoted above she said:

> As soon as I learned to form letters on paper, at about three years, I began to write stories, and this has been the basic and absorbing occupation, the intact line, of my life. . . . I made no attempt to publish anything until about ten years ago, but I have written and destroyed manuscripts quite literally by the trunkful. I say trunkful because I have spent fifteen years wandering about, weighted horribly with masses of paper and little else.

The first fruits in book form of Miss Porter's long apprenticeship appeared in 1930 when "Flowering Judas," a volume of six stories, appeared in a limited edition. In 1935 the collection was reissued together with four additional stories. Since then one more book has appeared containing three "short novels" under the title "Pale Horse, Pale Rider" (1939). At forty-five, therefore, she has published two books and a few stories scattered through the magazines. Yet her first book was enough to establish her reputation as one of the most accomplished of American writers of fiction. Unlike many writers Miss Porter did not learn her craft in public. The "promising" stage of her development was never exhibited. What we have had is the finished product. This has undoubtedly been one element in the sparseness of her production, though not the important one.

An examination of the title story of that first book easily explains the unanimous and joyous praise of critics accustomed to deal with bulk and "promise." This story is still to my mind one of her very best. The prose has extraordinary purity and concentration; it is delicate yet strong, and very clear; all the dross has been distilled out. What is more important, it never gives the effect of irrelevant or insipid prettiness, never therefore becomes a "style" because it never once, for its own sake, becomes separated from the story she has to tell, either its characters or situation; and what is most important, the story itself flows from reality as directly as a spring from a mountain side. The language, for all the skill one knows must have been employed, never appears as more than the medium, an invisible substance, through which reality makes itself manifest. It is only afterward, when one reflects that the way in which this particular reality has been made manifest is both significant and inevitable, that one becomes conscious of the deep-working sense of form. A second reading yields as much pleasure as the first, though of a different sort, for the subtle and sure coordination of form, substance, and style creates its own suspense. In this sense Miss Porter is a writer's writer, yet her stories have such seeming effortlessness and simplicity, they communicate reality so directly and vividly, that they have often aroused responses from the most unexpected and non-literary quarters. Needless to say, not all her stories reach the high point of Flowering Judas. Hacienda, for instance, is relatively poor. Yet most of them have the quality of uniqueness. Her capacity for absorbing varieties of experience is not limited by their disparity; consider, for instance, A Day's Work, which appeared recently in *The Nation,* and Flowering Judas or Noon Wine. The result is that taken together her stories give an impression of range out of proportion to their number.

Because of her very excellences, the critical excitement roused by Miss Porter's work has been part expectation. I shall not be the first to wonder publicly what the future will show and whether Miss Porter's talent is adapted to the longer, sustained form of the full-length novel which is demanded willy-nilly of every good writer of fiction. I raise the question not only because it has been an issue with the critics but because it provides as good a frame as any for an analysis of her special qualities as a writer. It would seem, moreover, to be an issue in her own mind. Her work shows a progressive reach toward longer forms; and her use of the term "short novels" to describe the three 20,000-word stories in her last book seems to suggest both defense and aspiration.

As I have already indicated, Miss Porter's creative process in relation to her material is that of intuitive absorption rather than the frontal attack based on conscious intellectual formulation.

> My whole attempt [she has written] has been to discover and understand human motives, human feelings, to make a distillation of what human relations and experiences my mind has been able to absorb. I have never known an uninteresting human being, and I have never known two alike; there are broad classifications and deep similarities, but I am interested in the thumb-print.

The panorama, with its furniture and stage props, social or political, cannot engage her. She will never write a "novel of American life," for the large generalization is alien to her. She will never attempt to conquer confusion or chaos by describing it, as American writers do over and over again—with results interesting or dull but never final. Her writing proceeds out of clarity achieved.

Both in conception and execution her work seems to me to bear the relation to prose that the lyric bears to poetry. Her intelligence is extraordinary, but it is akin to that of a poet rather than, say, of a novelist like Henry James, who was also interested in the thumb-print but had both the strong desire and the capacity for broad formulation which the long flight requires.

So far as I can see, Miss Porter is driven by no com-

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pulsion to impose order on the confused and chaotic American wilderness. She hates many of its manifestations and suffers from them, but the sense of detachment from public life, including her own, the "self-imposed isolation which seems to have been almost unconscious," remains. Considering the long-winded and inept attempts to make order which pour from the presses every year in the form of half-realized and half-concealed autobiography, I have no reproaches. The thumb-print in the wilderness may have a limited significance, but the large formulation in this particular time and place is pretty likely to be false.

Given these considerations and Miss Porter's bent, I think her best work will continue to be done in the shorter forms. Of the stories in her last book, Noon Wine seems to me superior to Old Mortality, good as it is, and much superior to Pale Horse, Pale Rider. Old Mortality resembles the novel rather than the short story; naturally, being slower paced, it lacks the tension and suspense which Noon Wine shares with Flowering Judas. But it lacks also the compensating depth and range of the novel. As for Pale Horse, Pale Rider, it verges on the sentimental and gives an impression of diffusion and fabrication which are almost non-existent in Miss Porter's work as a whole.

My own demand is for more short stories of the quality of Flowering Judas. Yet I believe that Miss Porter's productivity, in public, will continue to be limited. Her pride in craftsmanship is one element. I also suspect many an unfinished manuscript. She works in spurts of energy followed by periods of inertia. This suggests what her best stories show, a pattern of creative impulses which are intense but relatively short in span. It makes for freshness in each new story; it does not indicate quantity production. But in setting up a "little academy" of form in the wilderness Miss Porter has made a valuable contribution to American writing.

Miss Porter lives at present in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where she has plenty of elbow room. She is a social being—with extraordinary personal and social charm—who likes talk, visiting, and "plain playing." The practical arts of cooking and gardening engage her, and on one occasion, I am told, she practically denuded the surrounding neighborhood of fruits and vegetables for an orgy of canning.

In the list of her more serious avocations music comes next to books. In 1933 her "French Song Book" was published privately in Paris. It is a collection with music of old songs in the original and in translation. She likes best music up to Mozart; she is fond of the old stringed instruments; and her preoccupation with musical forms seems to me apparent in the structure of such a story as Maria Concepcion.

[*This is the last of a series of articles on American writers.*]

Everybody's Business

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Sterling: Fears and Facts

THE pound sterling, once the rock-like symbol of international capitalism, has ceased since the war to be a free, universally acceptable currency. It has not suffered the nightmare transformations of the mark, which for years has been broken up into a series of practically unconnected currencies, but it has taken on a split personality, and the cleavage has rapidly widened in the past few weeks.

At the outbreak of hostilities last September the British exchange-control authorities, who for a long time had been holding the dollar-sterling rate at around 4.70, stepped aside and let the market take its own course, though at the same time stringent restrictions on the transfer of funds abroad by British residents were instituted. When selling pressure lessened and the rate was around 4.00, the control took charge again. An official rate of 4.03 was then established, at which perforce the majority of London exchange transactions have since taken place.

The British merchant purchasing American steel sheets must now obtain the dollars he needs to meet the bill from the Bank of England, and pay for them at the official rate. Similarly the exporter of goods to the United States or the capitalist who has sold American stocks on Wall Street must turn over the dollar proceeds to the authorities, accepting sterling in exchange. But not everyone who wants to turn sterling into dollars is permitted to use the official channels, and consequently a "free" market has developed in New York and other financial centers. An American resident who possesses a bank balance in Britain, or who receives dividends from an investment there, may receive permission to remove his money. But the authorities will not provide him with dollars, and hence he must seek exchange in the free market, where rates fluctuate in accordance with supply and demand. Until recently the demand has been fairly well maintained by importers and others with bills to pay in Britain, who have naturally sought to obtain sterling where it was cheapest. As a result, the free rate, after an initial plunge in September, recovered, and remained for some months only a few cents below the official quotation.

Recently, however, free sterling has slumped sharply. Last week it dropped at one moment below 3.50, and at the time of writing it is 3.57. This movement is the result of new regulations introduced in Britain in an effort to increase the supply of dollars in the hands of the authorities. Thus exporters of certain goods of which Britain or the empire has a near-monopoly—tin, rubber, jute, and Scotch whiskey are leading examples—must now make out their invoices in certain specified foreign currencies, which must of course be exchanged at the official rate. This means that the American importer of whiskey can no longer economize by buying free sterling. And since genuine Scotch cannot be obtained from any other source, this popular British product will bring in more dollars to the Bank of England.

At the same time the cessation of demand for sterling in

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the free market by importers of goods of this kind naturally tends to depress its dollar value. This, in turn, means that importers of competitive British goods, such as textiles, are able to pay for them more cheaply. In some quarters this aspect of the situation has caused protests, and the action of the British government has been described as an example of exchange manipulation for the purpose of obtaining trade advantages. It must be acknowledged, however, that the effects of the war on Britain's balance of payments have been such that sterling, whether free or controlled, can hardly be considered artificially depressed. On the contrary, it is standing at an unnaturally high level and is being maintained there by a constant drain on Britain's gold and foreign investments.

For generations Britain's imports have vastly exceeded exports, but payments for shipping and other services, and the return on foreign investments, enabled it to balance its international accounts and keep sterling on an even keel. On the outbreak of war, however, imports jumped tremendously. True, purchases of certain foreign luxuries were either restricted or prohibited, but this did little to offset the insatiable demands of the war machine. Moreover, economic dislocation caused a simultaneous slump in exports, and although there has been recovery in this department it has not kept pace with the increase in imports. As a result the adverse balance of trade has risen in the first six months of the war to over $1,844,000,000, representing a rise of 51 per cent over a year ago. Continuance of this trend implies that Britain, in order to balance its accounts with the rest of the world, will be compelled to draw on capital reserves to the tune of at least $2,000,000,000 a year. In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that every possible step should be taken to economize in the use of foreign exchange and to tap new sources where possible.

Some measures which the British government has taken are decidedly inconvenient to American interests. Tobacco growers feel aggrieved when British cigarette manufacturers turn to Turkey; California fruit farmers protest when Britain reduces its consumption of fruit and buys only from the empire, where payment can be made in sterling; cotton planters curse when Lancashire switches more of its orders to Brazil, with which business can be done on a barter basis; industrialists are alarmed when they hear of an intensive British export drive in Latin America.

Against the harm suffered or feared by such interests must be set the fact that actually American trade has received a very considerable stimulus from the war. In the first two months of this year exports have expanded by $283,769,000. Imports have risen, too, but only by $105,356,000, and the increase has largely been in raw materials with no sign of "dumping" by means of depreciated sterling. Nor has Britain cut into our Latin American markets. On the contrary, we seem to have gained a large part of Germany's extensive business in that direction. All in all, there is little evidence of harm done to American business as a whole by British war-time financial and commercial policies. In fact, the European conflict has brought us a significant expansion in business, which, while not justifying the term boom, is helping to sustain our economy by offsetting to some extent the decline in government spending.

In the Wind

THE SALEM (Oregon) Chamber of Commerce invited journalist Richard L. Neuberger to address its members and told him to select his own topic. He informed the Chamber that his subject would be "Why I Am a Liberal." Shortly afterward the invitation was abruptly withdrawn. The Chamber also announced that a secret program committee would henceforth choose speakers—and subjects—for meetings.

ALTHOUGH THERE has been no official explanation of the change, Father Coughlin's broadcasts since his one-week disappearance from the radio have been significantly nonpolitical. He talks almost exclusively on religion and avoids controversial issues. Two possible explanations are: (1) he wants the furor over the Christian Front exposure to subside; (2) he has finally been curbed by church authorities.

LONDON REPORTS (on unreliable authority) the appearance of the following ad in a Nazi newspaper: "Parrot, Lost. . . . Will finder kindly return to the address below. Note—the opinions of the parrot are not those of the owner."

A NAZI propaganda film, "The West Wall," was recently scheduled for exhibition at the German House in St. Louis. The directors of the House canceled the showing because many St. Louis Germans affiliated with the House don't like Hitler. . . . All ex-members of the Ku Klux Klan are being circularized in the current effort to bring the Klan back to national prominence.

WHILE THE BREACH between John L. Lewis and the White House undoubtedly has many causes, intimates of Lewis insist that personal rebuffs play a crucial part, especially F. D. R.'s rejection of Lewis's advice on appointments. It is said that Lewis vigorously proposed the appointment of Josephine Roche as head of the Federal Security Administration; Paul McNutt was named by the President. The same thing happened with NLRB appointments.

SOCIETY NEWS: "Five attractive, amusing, and intelligent socially eligible Bostonians (two couples, one bachelor), short of funds, would like invitation to spend week-end with well-to-do Aryans with good cellar. References furnished and required. Box 719-D."—From the Personals column of the *Saturday Review of Literature*.

RUSSIAN NEWS: "Twenty-two years of Bolshevism have made the Russians a runty race. Their stature has been reduced eight inches."—Editorial in the Chicago *Tribune*. . . . "All [the Soviet prisoners] were tall, broad-chested, silent fellows."—Dispatch to the New York *Times*.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

FROM a reader of *The Nation* comes a letter not unfamiliar in tenor written from Belleville, Illinois, the town in which some of my ancestors settled in search of tolerance after their flight from German autocracy in the eighteen forties. This correspondent is much perturbed because I ventured to object to Franklin Roosevelt's becoming a candidate for a third term. "Why," she writes, "do you never miss an opportunity to denounce the President? He has accomplished far more than any other President of recent years, but never have I heard one word of praise from you. It is always denunciation. You say he should do more for home conditions. He has done a good deal more than most Presidents." And then this delightful person says out of her broadmindedness that she is telling on me to the editor of *The Nation* and assuring Miss Kirchwey that if I continue in "this Hoover-like vein" she will be "forced to take the *New Republic* instead of *The Nation.*"

At first I thought I would consign this letter to the waste-paper basket, where I have thrown so many hundreds and thousands like it during the four decades of my newspaper activities, but then I fell to thinking. I wondered just how many such had come into my hands and how large a percentage of them wound up in the same way: "If you don't write as I want you to write, I'll read somebody else." I reflected, too, on how many of the writers had been guilty of just such false statements as the lady made about my comments on the President. Again and again and again when I have received letters protesting against my or Freda Kirchwey's or somebody else's articles in *The Nation,* or the *Evening Post,* or the *Nautical Gazette,* or some other publication I owned or edited at the time, I have been simply appalled at the evidence they offered of how little the average reader read or remembered of the articles in the publication to which he subscribed. One leader that offends them is singled out and all the rest forgotten. The years of service that the paper may have rendered to them, the enormous amount of useful information they may have obtained from the editors and contributors, go for naught. This lady, for example, says *The Nation* is a "wonderfully fairminded periodical," which "always gives credit where credit is due [outside of my page] and goes after hypocrisy and injustice in a truly admirable manner." Yet she is ready to deprive herself of this admirable paper because one old contributor fails to please her!

Well, I could show her many, many pages of mine in which I have praised Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal. I have said, for instance, that the President has done more for labor than all our other Presidents put together, that his social-welfare legislation has at last put the United States abreast of other great nations. I might even recall that I praised his Chicago "aggressor" speech when other liberal editors damned him for it. I might point out to her that the President himself, although I do oppose him from time to time, is broadminded enough to let our friendship continue and flourish. But what would be the use? The fairmindedness she praises in *The Nation* is not hers if she will not allow an honest journalist the right to differ from her hero in the White House.

There is, however, a serious side to this letter. An unreasoning enthusiasm for a political leader is a dangerous thing in any country. The passionate devotion to Franklin Roosevelt felt by so many people, their belief that he can do no wrong, and that there is no one else who can serve and save the Republic at this time, is nothing new in our political life. Theodore Roosevelt had his following which felt that he could never err. One of them said to me, when I proved to him that T. R. had been guilty of an ethically improper act, that it didn't make any difference to him what the President did: if he killed his own mother, this man would still be for him. Now we have the F. D. R. fanatics, who believe either that he can do no wrong or that the good he does entitles him to do some wrong—at least he should not be criticized for it.

This is a most dangerous attitude for any considerable part of the electorate to take. It emboldens the executive in question to go beyond his powers and to do things he would never think of attempting if there were a keen, intelligent, objective, and critical public opinion confronting him. If Franklin Roosevelt should be given a third term, it would, in my judgment, encourage him to pursue policies and to exercise powers that would be gravely detrimental to the future of this country—here I am again offending the objector I have quoted! Yet in this crisis of the Republic it is essential that public men should be judged by the highest standards; no amount of personal admiration or affection such as I feel for the President should free me or any other independent journalist from holding the scales even so far as is within our power. Certainly this is not yet a one-man country, nor has the time yet come to hold any man beyond criticism, however numerous his good deeds.

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Prologue to February

BY FRANZ HOELLERING

[*The following episode, from a forthcoming novel, takes place in Vienna two weeks before the February days of 1934, when the Socialists, besieged in the Workers' houses and hopelessly outnumbered, made their last heroic stand against the troops of the Dollfuss regime.*]

THE council meeting was held in the Workers' Home. The committee had proposed using one of the secret meeting-places where the workers were accustomed to take refuge from the hostile state. But Hippmann had opposed this move. His argument had been that they were more safe from spies in the Workers' Home; behind it was hidden the unexpressed desire to deprive the mounting tendency to conspiracy of a background that encouraged it.

At the long green council table and along the walls sat fifty men and several women. Most of them were in their working clothes; they had come directly from the factories. When Hippmann entered, the tired backs straightened in unison. The union representative, Müller, interrupted his whispered conversation with the district secretary.

At the table sat the older committeemen. They were all known to Hippmann; they were his friends, upon whom he had been able to depend at elections. The party, acting through these calm and steady men, had resisted all revolutionary temptations when its power was absolute at the collapse of the empire, and had determined upon the slow and difficult course of evolutionary democracy. "As they did not become presumptuous in those days, so they will not despair now," thought Hippmann, as his greeting, "Friendship," was answered with a heavy chorus of "Friendships" and with deferential nods and cordial handclasps. The greeting sounded less spontaneous from the corners opposite the head of the table, where a seat had been reserved for him next to the chairman. Up there were grouped men of a different type, younger men with determined faces. Against his will Hippmann's heart was drawn toward them. In their midst he saw Scheller, tall, thin, a soldier rather than a party functionary.

The chairman put out his hand toward the little bell in front of him; the silence was complete before the gesture ended. The bright little trill leaped over the long green table between the many serious faces as over a meadow. The formalities of opening the session were quickly disposed of. The representative of the governing council of the party was given the floor.

Hippmann put together, neither too slowly nor too quickly, the papers which he had been turning over during the brief address of the chairman. It gave him time to overcome a disturbing train of thoughts and impulses, of hesitations, of contradictions, even of fear. He waited another moment, already on his feet, a moment of concentrated perception comparable to the tension of the actor emerging upon the stage. This tension, as he well knew, was communicated to his audience, and he must feel it vibrating back before he could begin to speak.

It was a delight to the speaker Hippmann to conceal his technique. In contrast to many of his comrades he knew that politics was not everything; he had learned that his hearers were most grateful for good handy sentences which they could take home into their private lives. He avoided all the superiority of the expert; he remained a human being with imperfections, guarding the connection between ideals and daily life. He awakened the feeling in his audience that he knew far more than he said, and that he could have been, even outside the political field, a leader and a counselor of men. Now and then he inserted into his argument a statement no one could contradict, and allowed it to give color to more doubtful ones. He was capable of interrupting a complicated analysis of the political situation with the affirmation of the fact that two times two is four, as if he had been saying nothing else in more difficult passages. Precisely calculated gestures, which habit had made second nature, bridged the chasm between what was said and what was left unsaid and perhaps better not said. Bad speakers called him an actor. Let them be jealous! It was not true that he misused his talent; he was no demagogue. He said what he thought. Or thought what he said. Which came first, the speaking or the thinking? —this question sometimes caused him moments of discomfort, especially when he was tired. But he was over fifty, and he had become a public institution. This institution had to go on functioning.

The spokesman of the party's governing council began with the unexpected observation that readiness to stake one's life on one's convictions was the first mark of an ethical personality. He pronounced this sentence slowly and in his most earnest manner. A tone of finality vibrated in his voice and evoked in the hearts of his hearers memories of the truly elevated moments of their lives. Weary eyes shone. The oppressiveness changed into solemnity. It was the old and ever-effective magic of Hippmann; when he spoke, the most exhausted piece-worker

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felt once more like a human being. The opening of his speech was of course a bid for favor. But not even Scheller felt it to be so. Hippmann's reputation as a fighter was firmly founded. Since he had become known to the broad party masses in 1917 as organizer of the famous January strike against the continuation of the war, he had voted in every crisis for the more radical solution. In 1919 he had been in favor of a thorough cleaning out; in the crisis that followed the burning of the Palace of Justice in 1917 and even more vigorously during the past month of March he had demanded the general strike and the arming of the Defense Corps to uphold the democratic constitution. He had earned the right to criticize the radical opposition. The party council knew what they were doing when they sent him, thought Müller, the union representative, who began to write figures on the pad before him: 1919, 1927, 1934; again and again, large and round.

Passing on to the order of the day, Hippmann offered excuses for the organizers of last Saturday's demonstration, who had flouted the party's orders. How well he could understand them, their impatience and their élan! That thousands of workers had responded to their call was reason enough to take them seriously. It would be a grave error to dismiss them as irresponsible fanatics. They were the advance guard of the workers of Vienna. If, nevertheless, he was obliged to condemn the demonstration unreservedly, it was in the first place not for the merely formal reason that it had been a breach of party discipline but for the much more decisive one that during a crisis in which the party's very existence was at stake it was inexcusable to play with fire. To stage a demonstration and then permit it to be dispersed without effective resistance—that was always a grave mistake. If war, then war! Half actions were bad actions. They disappointed friends and encouraged enemies. They were simply bad politics. It was such actions that he had come here to condemn. And he had come for a higher purpose, to contribute to the clarification of every mind before it was too late. For he could give to even the most impatient his assurance that a decision was imminent.

Thus it was well always to begin with fundamentals. Who was the enemy? Whom must they fight? Was it the government? Or the Home Guard allied with the government and bent on taking it over? Was it the National Socialists, who opposed both? Behind the government stood the League of Nations, public opinion in England and France, and the Catholic church; behind the Home Guard stood Italy; and behind the National Socialists, the Third Reich. The government itself was not united. Its democratic wing was eager to make peace with the workers in order to protect the country against a German putsch or plans for annexation; its Home Guard wing was pro-Fascist and relied on Italian help against Germany; the dominant center, though inclined to make common cause with the Home Guard, was unable to come to a decision. These facts raised many questions. Were the workers of Austria strong enough to fight three opponents at once? Could they make use of the conflict among these opponents? Was it still possible to maneuver? Were all these opponents equally dangerous or was there a chief enemy? "Such is our situation, such are our problems," said Hippmann and took a sip of water to give his hearers time to grasp all the complications implied.

Continuing, he answered his own questions one after the other. It was as simple as ABC, or at least his manner made it seem so. Chief enemy: the National Socialists; compared to them the Home Guard was almost a cultural movement. Enemy number two: the Home Guard as the foe of democracy. Enemy number three: the government itself as long as it did not, at least in principle, restore the Parliament and freedom of press and assembly. The party could agree to a necessary limitation of formal democracy during a period of its probable abuse. In this case the common fight would be waged against the common enemy, the National Socialists, and for the very independence of Austria. Was that not clear?

"Clear." The firm voice of Scheller resounded through the room. "But enemy number three confronts us daily with Home Guard, police, and soldiers. We see no desire to come to an understanding with us."

"I can assure you, from personal knowledge, that forces in the government are working toward an understanding with us . . ."

"We have no faith in those forces," Scheller interrupted. "The government undermines our position by every means in its power. Its ally, the Home Guard, demands our destruction. The great industrialists and landowners are eager to kill two birds with one stone. That's their idea. It's also the idea of the Italian politician . . ."

The chairman rang his bell, but at a gesture from Hippmann permitted Scheller to continue.

". . . and the question is, whose support will the government rely on in its struggle with National Socialism—on ours, that is, on the people of Austria, or on Italy? I am convinced that the government has determined to pay Italy its price—our annihilation. The enemy we must fight, whether we want to or not, is this government. There is a last chance that the government will free itself from the Home Guard's clutches, if we are strong and determined, if we force them to it."

There was a murmur of applause from the group surrounding Scheller. The older men at the table looked expectantly at Hippmann, who went on in his friendliest tone.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

THE DEFENSE OF BELLES-LETTRES

BY LOUISE BOGAN

A NEW review, *Horizon,* devoted to literature and art appeared in England in January, 1940, and has now reached its third issue. In view of the battering that belles-lettres have been subjected to in the preceding ten years, this event deserves serious consideration. During times of economic crisis, when leaders of organized "class struggle" take over, the lines of communication must be kept clear at all costs. Ten years ago literature as "fine" or pure art was found to hamper these lines. Language had its purpose to serve, and its purely formal and delight-giving manifestations not only wasted time but obscured the issue. Some aspects of writing as an art, however, were found hard to clear away. But they could be slandered. "Ivory tower" became a term and image greatly execrated. It was suggested that bombs be dropped on it. To its defenders the imaginary "refuge" sometimes resembled a border fort, with the slings and arrows coming over in relays.

Early in the thirties, after the first mass desertion of intellectuals from the field of aesthetics, open fighting was general. This was the "We'll put you all behind tractors!" period, and feeling ran high. During heated discussions it often seemed likely that bookcases containing the less "useful" products of man's pen needed actual physical defense, to save certain volumes from being thrown into the fireplace or out the window. After 1935 all this changed. The attacks became more insidious and genteel. Highly moral "challenges" were issued. The bullying still went on, but in a nicer way. "Pantry poets" were mentioned, and poets who resembled "gentlemen's gentlemen." Poetry became "the deliverer of the people" in dinner-party speeches. Shakespeare and Dante were brought in as poets whose work was "native to the actual world." Not a word was uttered concerning contributions to life made, for example, by Villon, Mallarmé, Rimbaud, Baudelaire, Thomas Campion, Heine, Leopardi, or Alfred de Vigny. Mere valets, one and all!

This second period was actually more destructive of good sense and fine standards than the earlier name-calling. In America, when devotees of the class struggle merged with the bourgeoisie, they allied themselves with the culture hungry, a deadly species known to young societies. Art must be ironed out into acceptable gentility. "Give us something morally uplifting which we can understand" covered the implicit "Give us something creatively rigid which we can use [and make a profit on, both spiritually and materially, if possible]. Give us something boiled over, watered down, slick, mechanically perfect; something to open our tear ducts and still our conscience, while giving our minds no trouble." The "revolution" found itself in a spot; in the exact spot which every American writer worth his salt had always taken steps to avoid.

Let us examine the term "ivory tower." To whom was it first applied, and by whom? Many commentators, including, on one occasion, the present writer, have gone astray, and attributed the phrase to Vigny himself. The matter was publicly settled once and for all by E. M. Forster, who correctly attributed the term to Sainte-Beuve, who applied it in 1837 to Vigny. And why was Sainte-Beuve's term, as applied to Vigny, hardly one of opprobrium? Born in 1797, four years after the execution of Louis XVI, Vigny died in 1863, when the absolute power held for ten years by Napoleon III was undergoing its first revision. "Vigny had lived through regimes so different," writes a recent biographer, "that everything in the universe seemed to him unstable. Poetry and thought alone remained safeguards and protectors." Like Stendhal, Vigny was an early and ruthless critic of the crude standards of a beginning bourgeois rule. In "La Maison du Berger" he described the artist, not as a cowardly renegade, but as a companion of the holy Muse. It was politicians, the interested and the *arrivistes,* who were fighting on the other side.

> Le pur enthousiasme est craint des faibles âmes
> Qui ne sauraient porter son ardeur et son poids . . .

And where, one may now with reason ask, would the great poetry of the generation succeeding Vigny have found a base and a champion if Vigny had not held out against the signs of his "times"? Without Vigny as forerunner it is difficult to imagine Baudelaire or even Flaubert. The art of writing in France, sweeping onward and upward with Victor Hugo, without Vigny's example might have struck a period repulsive in its hollowness and sententiousness, instead of developing, from Baudelaire, into a series of schools from which the best modern writing in all languages directly stems.

After Edmund Wilson's "Axel's Castle" (1931) no book concerned in a disinterested way with the development of English and American literature since 1900 appeared until the publication of Cyril Connolly's "Enemies of Promise" in the spring of 1939. Connolly

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brought the development down to the present. With wit and insight he traced down innovators and defined schools. From the death of the English aesthetic movement after the imprisonment of Wilde, through the rise of the Hearty Genteel Georgian and Mandarin Prose (Strachey, Woolf, Huxley, including the English translation of Proust), through the appearance of Hemingway's Tough Guy and Spender and Auden, to the end products of the "writing-for-the-masses" enthusiasm, Connolly gives chapter and verse—dates, tables, and examples.

What, Connolly asks—and it is he, with Stephen Spender, who has launched the new review, *Horizon*—must the writer now do in order to breast the confusion and write a book which will have some chance of survival? He concludes that it would be a good thing at present if the writer took Gide's advice and dared to swim against the current. Can there be a revival of imaginative literature possessing, the influences merging, "that discipline in the conception and execution of a book, that planning, which gives simply written things the power to endure—without which the imagination reverts to the wilderness"?

Will the almost psychopathic hatred and distrust of "pure" writing, fostered by political parties, continue or by degrees fade out? Whole new regions have developed for writers' exploration during the years they have spent documenting their surroundings or indulging in bad-tempered baby-talk. Can a review dedicated to disinterested comment upon literature and the life it at once derives from, deepens, and delights now survive, or are the guilt-fear-hatred hold-overs of the last decade still too unresolved to allow its survival? Are there no young people with talent and detached minds, eager for refreshment and example? Will the ivory tower continue to be represented as a coward's refuge, and not as the workshop, stronghold, and place of meditation without the concept of which no generation can produce the combined brave fighter, sensitive thinker, and good workman known to all ages as the artist?

The World of William Faulkner

THE HAMLET. By William Faulkner. Random House. $2.50.

I DON'T suppose it makes sense to call a book wonderful, and then proceed to dismiss it. But I have come away from "The Hamlet" conscious of its prodigious talent, yet unwarmed, unmoved, and unrefreshed. The book's poetry is close, at times, to magnificent—but it is poetry of the senses only, without regard to the emotions. The book's sly, perverse humor is undeniable; yet it is a humor which, for the very reason that it moderates the horrors it plays upon, somehow robs those horrors of the dignity and importance which alone would justify them. The book's imaginativeness has enabled Faulkner to create something like a world of his own; yet that world is too artificially lighted and too demoniacally propelled to mean anything as revelation. I suppose that Mr. Faulkner's world chiefly disappoints me by seeming inhuman, so that—for all Mr. Faulkner's gifts—it never seems of first-rate interest. (It has a first-rate fascination, but that is not the same thing.)

Mr. Faulkner's forte, like that of the South he inhabits, is decay. A certain romantic streak prevents him from doing a really bang-up job on the decay of the Southern aristocracy; but when he gets going with pore whites, absolutely nothing inhibits him from exploring the most polluted streams and malarial swamps of the subhuman spirit. In "The Hamlet" he introduces the Snopes family, a clan that sometime after the Civil War descended on a Mississippi settlement called Frenchman's Bend and left its mark there. There was old Ab Snopes, whose popularity was a little diminished by his reputation for burning down other people's barns; and Mink Snopes, who soon was involved in murder; and Ike Snopes, an idiot boy who fell in love with a cow; and above all, Flem Snopes, who, using his father Ab's arsonical tendencies as a club to browbeat the town, eventually came to own it.

If I have touched on the Snopes activities with a touch of levity, I suppose it is because—once I had come out from under Mr. Faulkner's spell—they seemed a little too bad to be true. The story of Flem Snopes is really extraordinary in itself; so is the tale of the girl he married; so is the tale of the idiot boy. But the Snopeses as a tribe are somehow a lot less horrifying than any one particular Snopes, just as one Kallikak would seem a very painful subject, but a dozen Kallikaks might appear to be rather nice playmates for one another. The point is that something most shocks or terrifies us because it seems out of line; you must set the abnormal against the normal to grasp how abnormal it is. Mr. Faulkner, in "The Hamlet" as in much of his other work, provides us with no sense of contrast. If it is his great gift to be able to create a world of his own, it is his equally great limitation to make that world a little too different from ours to seem entirely convincing—or, I am tempted to say, relevant.

I certainly don't quarrel with Mr. Faulkner's material—we all are aware of the things that go on in the South, and after Freud we are all educated to believe that vice is better called pathology. I quarrel only with Mr. Faulkner's handling—with what often seems to me Mr. Faulkner's exploitation—of his material. For one thing, I am forced to have my reservations, in terms of its importance as art, about a world into which pity does not enter and out of which *great* suffering never comes. From Villon to Dostoevski one encounters a humanity comparable to Mr. Faulkner's, which may horrify, but with which one always feels kinship. One feels almost no kinship with the Snopeses; there is something a little too spectacular about them. There is something, for that matter, a little too spectacular about Mr. Faulkner. His people are grotesques because he is interested in grotesques; but they are seldom great grotesques, because there is something twisted and puny about them. As for Mr. Faulkner's writing, it continues as it has been. Marvelous in a way as it is, there is something so overloaded and mon-

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strous about it that it not only sins against taste, not only sins against meaning, but—so far as I am concerned—ends by seeming unpleasant, like dirty lace.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

A Religion of Science

DANGEROUS THOUGHTS. By Lancelot Hogben. W. W. Norton and Company. $2.75.

PROFESSOR HOGBEN preaches scientific humanism, but since his brief exposition of it in *The Nation* last year he has persuaded himself that it is a dangerous creed—dangerous, that is, to himself—for it implies an unwillingness to choose between Marxism and fascism. From between the jaws of this nutcracker Mr. Hogben has continued to expound his doctrine by means of essays and lectures, fifteen of which, reprinted together, constitute "Dangerous Thoughts."

Judging by Mr. Hogben's lusty tone, the nutcracker is not squeezing his middle very hard, and judging from what he says about it, scientific humanism is not much more enticing than the two dogmas supposedly flanking it. The humanism is a microscopic kernel rattling around in an exceedingly hard-shelled nut of science; and the science is merely old-fashioned "scientism" ranting and storming in the most dispassionate and scientific manner at everything not itself.

Professor Hogben, as is well known, is the author of two best-selling attempts at the popularization of mathematics (for the million) and science (for the citizen). He believes accordingly that if we only go on researching with one hand and popularizing with the other, we shall be able to construct a really scientific society able to use in full measure the fruits of existing mechanical power. Naturally, political power will have to be lodged with those who have made mechanical power possible—the scientists. But in any case, moral forces will remain irrelevant, indeed disturbing, influences.

Any dissenter from this Saint-Simonist view gets short shrift at Mr. Hogben's hands, for it is plain to him that such dissent comes from scientific ignorance, and Professor Hogben is teacher, apostle, and high priest of science all in one. Scorn is his chief emotional resource, and he has even invented for his crusade a new talisman of authority. It consists in beginning a good many sentences to which no exception can be taken by the layman with the words "As a biologist." Then later on, in discussing capitalism or free trade, he asserts that they were "a biological failure," or that "biologically speaking, it must be said that, etc." By this means Professor Hogben's competence reaches out like a pseudopod to assimilate what it will, and can at the same time administer a swift kick to the undisciplined.

Considered as a teacher, Professor Hogben is nothing if not contradictory. He thinks the layman grossly ignorant of the impact of science upon society; he thinks human beings morally and mentally lazy, yet not naturally sinful, and at the same time quite capable of learning wisdom from popularized treatments of science. He also thinks scientific specialists in close touch and remarkable harmony with one another, so that when a man like C. E. M. Joad, who knows as much science as is good for any non-professional, makes a sound remark about the need for philosophy, Mr. Hogben biologically leaps on him, taunts him with being a mere professor and not a research man, and shatters him with the accusation of impudence.

It is clear that Professor Hogben wants us all to become choir boys in his church—happily not yet established—to chant the praises, not of the Lord who made him, but of him and his caste who have a corner on the Lord's grace. This lust for lordship is in fact quite open. Our author sighs for the days when Huxley reigned supreme, and he wishes that he too could annihilate Professor Joad's reputation by fiat as St. Thomas Henry would have done. The end in view is in both cases above reproach: light and learning for the greater good of mankind; but, alas, a familiarity with the zoo and a Jehovah complex are not sufficient guaranties of infallibility. Professor Hogben proves it on every page by an innocent display of second-hand misinformation on every subject not mathematical or biological. He thereby shows that the specialist without humility had better stick to the job where his arrogance is condoned in return for the perfection of his results. I hasten to add that three of the fifteen essays in this book, those, namely, dealing with John Wilkins, Sir William Petty (in part), and Scottish science in the late eighteenth century, seem to be excellent studies of important though little-known matters. It is when Professor Hogben talks about Hegel and Darwin, political economy, history, psychoanalysis, religion, and the humanities generally that he becomes the Dogberry of scientific humanism.

Nor are his manners any more sociable than his views. He expresses the utmost contempt for professors—though he is one himself—quite as if they were a recognizable race whose stigmata had failed to "take" on only one member of the tribe. Yet elsewhere Mr. Hogben attacks all race theories as superstitious (a good instance of scientists not agreeing), and lays the heavy hand of his sarcasm on the eugenists, who are after all only seeking to do to men's bodies what Mr. Hogben wishes he could do to their minds.

It is curious in this connection that seeing contemporary mankind as unregenerate and pig-headed, Professor Hogben should be concerned about maintaining their numbers. Population alarms delight him—though *Honi soit qui Malthus pense*—and he is proud of having four children, whom, he tells us incidentally, he prefers to those four others, the Brothers Karamazov. Add to this critical note his assertion that the two-child family is a psychological habit, that there is a more real life in a pub parlor than in academic groves, that professors' wives arouse his distaste, and you have a cross-section of Mr. Hogben's feelings about the future of the race.

He says somewhere that for a mistake in reasoning about facts, and not for a factual error itself, he would "plow" Sir Arthur Eddington. For a complete inability to organize his sentiments and attach them to coherent ideas, Professor Hogben should be similarly plowed, preferably by a psychoanalyst. None of his confusions would matter if he held a chair of philosophy or history or even psychology. But he himself has said it, and it is greatly to his credit, he is a biologist. Therefore a good many of our contemporaries whose native wit has been scattered by the impact of science will believe as gospel truth such statements, however improbable,

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silly, or self-contradictory, as are uttered by an F. R. S. or couched in jargon. I would not say that Mr. Hogben's every statement is silly, but I do say that the main danger in his dangerous thoughts is their inconsistency and repeated untrustworthiness. The "younger British biologists" have been palmed off on us as thinkers long enough. On his very first page our author tells us that if either the Marxists or the fascists win the day, he will be put to the torture "unless I apply my biological knowledge to the task of devising ways of terminating a hopeless existence with less personal inconvenience and discomfort." Was more pompous folderol ever put together to say "I shall commit suicide"? Mr. Hogben's vaunted youth may excuse him, though it is doubtful, in Bradley's famous words, whether most of us have ever been quite so young as this. JACQUES BARZUN

American Creeds

AMERICAN FAITH. By Ernest Sutherland Bates. W. W. Norton and Company. $3.75.

THE late Ernest Sutherland Bates was an astute observer and student of religious life and of its relation to social and political affairs. When therefore his publishers issue a posthumous book, completed just before his untimely death, dealing with the religious foundations of American life, one opens such a work with keen anticipation. But it must be admitted that the book does not fulfil one's hopes. It is primarily a chapter-by-chapter account of various forms of Protestantism—their European origins and their development on American soil. As far as they go, the chapters are interesting enough. But they do not give a picture of the whole. The analysis of interrelations between religious and political life remains minimal. Thomas Hall's "Religious Background of American Culture," published a decade ago, is a much more adequate and important contribution to the subject.

In tracing the origins of American democracy it is important to know just how the Calvinism of New England and the deistic rationalism of Virginia were mixed in the creed of early America and what element each contributed to the total. Similarly the relation of rational liberalism and sectarian evangelicalism in the Jacksonian democratic movement on the frontier is intriguing and important. Mr. Bates describes each of these movements separately but never uncovers their relation to each other. He comes close to answering the first question in his appreciation of the economic realism of James Madison, to whom he rightly assigns a high place among the intellectual founders of our republican form of government. Though Madison was a Virginian and a deist, he did not share the general optimism of the deists. His conception of a perpetual class struggle in society and his theory of pluralistic government as an instrument by which this struggle would be beguiled into a more or less stable equilibrium may have been the intellectual force which brought the Calvinistic pessimism of New England into agreement with the optimism of the thought which Jefferson typifies so perfectly. Despite Mr. Bates's appreciation of Madison's realism he assumes generally that only optimists contributed to the establishment of American democracy. On the whole, this is of course correct. Probably one reason why America to this day has a more optimistic social creed than any other modern nation is that religious and secular culture combined to establish this optimism. The optimism derived from the French encyclopedists and that which had its source in the pietism and utopianism of evangelical sects was perfectly mixed and compounded on the American frontier and became the unshakable creed of America. But the fascinating conflict and coincidence of optimism in these rival creeds are not studied here.

Mr. Bates has, in other words, written a book not on "American Faith" but upon "American Creeds," and for good measure he has included even sects of limited historical influence, such as Owenists, Fourierists, Mormons, and the Oneida Community. We are usually left wondering at the conclusion of a chapter just how this interesting little tale fits into the total epic of America.

There are some historical inaccuracies, though the book generally maintains a high standard of scholarship. Calvin is accused of having "set out deliberately to justify the acquisition of capitalistic profits." This is hardly an accurate description of Calvin's very guarded, qualified, and hesitant justification of interest. Mr. Bates is not aware of the degree to which Max Weber's and Ernst Troeltsch's thesis on the relation between Calvinism and capitalism has been qualified by other historians, notably R. H. Tawney. In interpreting the Reformation he makes the Reformation slogan "justification by faith" mean "inward inspiration" as against the Catholic ideal of "outward authority." This is not just to Catholicism and is not accurate in regard to the Reformation. Sectarian Protestantism, that is, the Protestantism of Quakers, Baptists, Methodists, and the like, may have emphasized "inward inspiration." But the orthodox Reformation meant to assert by its doctrine of "justification by faith" that the Catholic doctrine of "infused grace" was too optimistic in regard to human nature and claimed too great a perfection for the Christian. Against this optimism it asserted that a believer was "saved" only in the sense that he was forgiven, not in the sense that he was good. REINHOLD NIEBUHR

"Yellow Book" of the White War

THE FRENCH YELLOW BOOK. Diplomatic Documents (1938-1939). Published by Authority of the French Government. Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.50.

THIS is a publication of great importance, although it is naturally far from being a complete history of French diplomatic activity during the period. As in all such cases the documents have been selected, and the omissions are no doubt as important as what is included. One suspects that the proportion of omissions is particularly large among Bonnet's own dispatches. The number of cases in which there is no reply from him to dispatches from the French diplomatic representatives is considerable. In many of these cases it is evident that he must have replied. In the Yellow Books concerning the affairs of Morocco before the last war a very large number of Delcassé's replies to ambassadors were omitted. I was told by an eminent person that they were omitted because they were so compromising.

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This "Yellow Book," however, is more complete, more honest, and more informative than the British "Blue Book," which includes no diplomatic documents earlier than May 28, 1939, and gives Chamberlain's speech at Birmingham on March 17, 1939, but not his speech in the House of Commons two days earlier.

The remarkable dispatches of Coulondre, who succeeded François-Poncet as French ambassador to Berlin in November, 1938, alone make the book worth reading. They show him to be a man of keen insight and sound judgment, and subsequent events have demonstrated how extraordinarily well-informed he was. If his warnings had been listened to, much might have been avoided. It is clear from his dispatches that many of us, including myself, were mistaken in thinking that Hitler never believed that England and France would act if he attacked Poland. Although he sometimes wavered, he seems to have been convinced as early as the end of May, 1939, that a German attack on Poland would probably mean a general war. The decisive factor was the Russo-German pact of August 23, 1939. One of the most interesting documents is that of June 1, 1939, in which Coulondre reports that General Keitel and General von Brauchitsch had been consulted by Hitler and had told him that Germany had very little chance of winning a war unless the neutrality of Russia was secured, but would probably have the victory if it was. The opinion at the time in the German Foreign Office was that Hitler would not risk war if he had to fight Russia as well as England and France, but would risk it if Russia remained neutral. The responsibility of the Soviet government is thus demonstrated. Stalin let war loose on Europe.

The documents also make it clear that the German annexation of Bohemia and Moravia on March 15, 1939, was no surprise to the French and British governments, which were accessories before the fact. Three weeks after the signature of the Munich agreements Hitler told François-Poncet that England and France had made a mistake in promising to guarantee the frontiers of the new Czechoslovakia (No. 18), and it was evident in December, 1938, that the German government would not observe the agreement (No. 35). On February 8, 1939, the French government formally asked the German government for its "views" on the question of the guaranty provided for in the Munich agreements, and on March 2 the German government replied with a refusal to fulfil its undertaking and, to quote Coulondre, intimated "that the Western powers have no longer any right to interest themselves in Central European affairs." From that moment the intention to attack the remnant of Czechoslovakia was clear. Coulondre's account (No. 77) of the hours of torture to which Hacha, a sick man, was subjected until at last, at 4:30 a. m. on March 15, 1939, he signed the death warrant of his country is the most poignant diplomatic document that I have ever read.

It appears that for some time before Litvinov's dismissal on May 4, 1939, Berlin believed a change in Soviet policy to be possible, and immediately after the dismissal Hitler began to consider an understanding with Russia. From the first the partition of Poland was suggested (Nos. 123, 124, and 125). The fact that Hitler had on three occasions—in September, 1938, and in January and March, 1939—vainly

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tried to induce the Polish government to join in an attack on Russia (No. 114) no doubt made him inclined to join with Russia against Poland. It is evident that he hesitated a great deal before finally committing himself. One of Coulondre's dispatches (No. 194) confirms Frederick Kuh's information in *The Nation* of March 16 that Hitler decided to close with Moscow early in August, 1939.

The interesting reports of telephonic communications in Appendix III show that both the French and British accepted at first Mussolini's proposal of a conference, and that this was the cause of the delay in declaring war on Germany. The text of the French reply is not given. Mussolini did not invite the Polish government to the conference. To Bonnet's inquiry whether Poland would agree, Beck replied: "We are in the thick of war as the result of unprovoked aggression. The question before us is not that of a conference, but that of the common action which should be taken by the Allies to resist. I have heard nothing, moreover, from any quarter of the Italian plan." For once one can sympathize with Beck. One would like to know some of his later remarks when he awaited the common action in vain. The sad lesson of this "Yellow Book" is, "Woe to the countries that are guaranteed by England and France!" The English translation of the book is excellent.

ROBERT DELL

Life of Washington

GEORGE WASHINGTON. By Nathanial Wright Stephenson and Waldo Hilary Dunn. Oxford University Press. Two Volumes. $10.

WE HAVE here a monumental work. Its two volumes weigh six pounds and contain nearly half a million words. The evident purpose of the authors was to produce a completely definitive biography of George Washington, to cover the subject so thoroughly that nothing more could be said. Professor Dunn, in his preface, writes, "At this time no biographer dares hope that he can present anything startlingly new about Washington. The field has been well gleaned." That is quite true. The only sound reason, therefore, for writing another biography of this great figure in our national history would be to shed new light on his character and motives; or to depict him on the broad canvas of his background, which would necessarily include sharp and clear sketches of his associates and contemporaries; or to put the Washington saga in the form of a simple narrative, alive with human understanding and drama, for the purpose of making Washington live in the minds of millions who now think of him only as a shadowy name.

Unfortunately, the present work does not fall into any of these classifications. The authors have no new concept of Washington's personality; they reveal nothing that is not already well known. Everyone knows that he was practical-minded rather than philosophical in temperament; that he was a man of great inner force; that he had a commanding presence; that his high temper was usually repressed; that his activity was physical rather than mental; that he liked fine clothes and dancing and fox-hunting; that his quiet courage never left him even in the most appalling circumstances; that he understood the military strategy of waiting, which made him a great general although he seldom won a battle; that his personal habits were orderly; that he had spells of mental lethargy; that he always acted as a gentleman should act, not by plan or calculation but by instinct. All these Washingtonian qualities are set forth in the two volumes, but they are so confused with insignificant details that a clear picture of Washington can be observed only through the reader's imagination.

The mass of inconsequential facts given in this work—many of them hardly worth recording—is so overwhelming that one is dazed and lost in them as in a wilderness. They represent a beaver-like persistence and energy that ought to be rewarded by a medal, or maybe by a Pulitzer prize. But on the other hand the economic causes of the American Revolution are discussed with such casual brevity that a reader who is not already well-informed will be puzzled as to how it came about. In the index there is no reference to the Mercantile System or the Stamp Act. However, the authors state definitely that they have purposely refrained from going into the history of the times. Yet much of the history of that period is also the history of George Washington. If you do not know the revolutionary impulse that brought the Continental Congress into being you are not likely to know the reasons for many of Washington's doings.

His associates appear as mere cardboard figures. In Alexander Hamilton the authors say that Washington "had not only an able, energetic, and zealous adviser but a genius as well, a man of far vision and almost unlimited resourcefulness." That is very good, but Hamilton's interesting origin and his remarkable youthful precocity are not mentioned. His operations in refunding the public debt and establishing a national currency are related in a most inadequate and cloudy fashion, though his financial operations were among the outstanding features of Washington's Presidential term.

Lafayette appears suddenly in this story of Washington's life, but nothing is said of his dramatic departure from France, his influence on the American Revolution, or his high standing in the French governing aristocracy. Benjamin Franklin's letter to Congress about Lafayette is not mentioned at all. General Nathanael Greene, who next to Washington was the ablest commander of the American side, never emerges as an outstanding personality. The authors fail to state that Benedict Arnold—before his treachery—was regarded as a general of great ability and daring. The descriptions of the battles of Brandywine and Monmouth are so cluttered with trivial details that readers will have much difficulty in figuring out just what did happen.

Notwithstanding its obvious shortcomings, this biography is an impressive book, and in some ways a valuable one. It is scholarly, accurate, and full of facts. But it is quite evident that its authors were overwhelmed by their vast accumulation of data, and that they lack the gift of story-telling.

This reviewer predicts that the book will be given much space in the literary periodicals, that the reviews will be highly favorable, and that it will be praised as an important contribution to American historical literature. Thereafter it will be entombed on the shelves of public libraries, where for many years it will be looked upon with great respect and seldom read.

W. E. WOODWARD

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European Hangover

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO EUROPE. By Geoffrey T. Garratt. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.75.

ONE of the familiar kidnapping cases of Greek mythology was that of the Phoenician princess Europa, whom Zeus in the form of a white bull carried off, swimming with her to Crete. History has now repeated this myth in a slightly modified version: some not exactly white bullies have assumed the form of Zeus to kidnap fair Europe and hold her for ransom. Such things happen when neither the morality of a people nor the police force is strong enough to curb the dominant gangsters. However, no explanation of the disaster is satisfactory unless it bares the remote causes inherent in the social structure.

It is from the watch tower of liberalism that Mr. Garratt has surveyed the European scene, the historical and sociological background of which he knows so thoroughly. He finds that the danger to peace in nineteenth-century Europe arose from an "unhealthy competition spirit among the larger powers." Democracy, supposed to safeguard peace, has never been "seriously tried over the greater part of the Continent." In both Great Britain and France "pluto-democracy" ruled after the World War. The author has doubts as to the effective existence of that mysterious force called "public opinion," though he admits that it functions as a mild "revisionary body" and that even English Conservatives can be frightened "by some real change in public opinion at home."

In Mr. Garratt's view the collapse of German democracy, a post-war patchwork at best, opened the road for aggression. From 1931 English and French reactionaries encouraged it by condoning each successive act of aggression, first by Japan, then by Italy, and finally by Germany. In criticizing Munich the author is perhaps more bitter than he should be. The fact remains that in spite of the colossal sums of money spent on the fighting services since 1931 Britain was unprepared in 1938. Mr. Garratt's presumption that a changed public opinion brought pressure to bear upon government policy is probably correct. That is how the war started, and the author has no misconceptions about it. He admits that it may be the beginning of a new "Dark Age," but he hopes that the United States, keeping out of the war, will take European "ideas and aspirations in safekeeping." The author seems to share, although in a more polite form, A. P. Herbert's yearning: "God protect us against a German victory and an American peace."

Being both a journalist and a scholar, Mr. Garratt is well informed, has a witty pen, and is as unbiased as is compatible with his liberal persuasion. Save for some slight inaccuracies, such as his statement that A. Ballin, the Kaiser's friend, was a Cabinet minister and his writing Wilhelmsplatz for Wilhelmstrasse, his factual statements are as reliable as contemporary history in war time allows.

To one of his similes, that the events of the last years "have been like the successive acts of a Greek tragedy," I would not subscribe. It was not the mysterious forces of an "irresistible destiny" that brought on the climax of the war. As Count Keyserling wrote after the World War, "Men have sown causes for over four years and now are surprised

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at the effects they reap." Mr. Garratt is not surprised, but he believes that "the European tragedy lies in our own minds." Unfortunately it is easier to kill men than to change their misdirected mental energies. Men's minds have become the victim of ambitious leaders with grandiose delusions, disciples of George Sorel's "Study of Violence" who have used the aftermath of war to put his theory into practice. It may take some time for Europe to get over this vainglorious hangover, for which not only the power-drunk megalomaniacs are responsible, but still more the combination of industrial capitalism with nationalist imperialism. That is what has happened to Europe. RUSTEM VAMBERY

York State Huck Finn

CHAD HANNA. By Walter D. Edmonds. Little, Brown and Company. $2.75.

THAT Mr. Edmonds knows how to tell a good yarn is no news to readers of "Rome Haul" and "Drums Along the Mohawk." His roustabouts, farmers, Indian-fighters, innkeepers talk in an earth-bound, juicy idiom only too rare in historical fiction, and his racy prose never revels in its own expertness, never diverts attention from the action.

For "Chad Hanna" he has gone once more to his favorite stamping-ground, the Erie Canal country, time 1836. Young Chad, stable hand and general helper at the Yellow Bud Tavern in Canastota, grew up the hard way: not knowing his parents' names or even his own age within five years, he ran away from an orphanage, drove horses for canal-boat captains who paid such waifs mainly in strappings, and finally cocked his wandering feet on the tavern porch railing beside those of old Elias Proops, pensioned Revolutionary veteran and long-distance spitter. In spite of his apparent lack of gumption Chad applies himself to the ticklish job of helping a runaway slave elude his pursuers, becomes so involved with the law that he joins a small, three-wagon circus just then conveniently passing through the town. "Huguenine's Great and only International Circus and Equestriole" enjoys the services of a wide-awake business agent, Mr. Bisbee, and a couple of first-class equestrians, but aside from these and a mangy lion named Oscar it is pretty small shakes, playing mostly the backwoods circuit, trying to buck the competition of the big Burke and Walsh menagerie, which disposes of stubborn rivals by the most up-to-date gangster tactics. Chad bolsters up the morale of the little show, sees it through fights, storms, hard times, even the death of Oscar, and of course he falls in love with a lady rider—in fact, with two lady riders. All of which could be just another adventure yarn if it were not for Mr. Edmonds's skilful workmanship and minute acquaintance with the folkways of New York State in the 1830's. Chad is a somewhat older Huckleberry Finn, and you will find it almost as much fun to follow him along the bumpy roads of the Canal country, driving tent pegs, learning the circus lingo, trading punches with the Burke and Walsh mugs, as to mosey down the Mississippi with his immortal prototype.

"Chad Hanna" has abundant zest and hearty exuberance, plenty of movement with a vivid sense of real back-country life. It will sell well, and deserves to. LOUIS B. SALOMON

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The World of Design

MAGIC MOTORWAYS. By Norman Bel Geddes. Random House. $3.50.

DESIGN THIS DAY. By Walter Dorwin Teague. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $6.

NINE CHAINS TO THE MOON. By Buckminster Fuller. J. B. Lippincott Company. $4.

THE first two of these books have been written by the men who supply the drama in the shapes of everyday objects for millions. Eight million persons are reported to have braved the queues to view the "Highways and Horizons" exhibit at the World's Fair in New York, of which "Magic Motorways" is the designer's exposition. The same skill that was applied there to the flow of people through a magnificent spectacle is applied in the book to a flow of words, pictures, and ideas directed to setting up desire. In its own terms the performance is a splendid one, and is worth the assiduous study of publicists working in a democracy. Incidentally, no one man could have managed to have held his course so securely, keeping a technical subject within the range of popular understanding, interest, and absorption rate. Such books, produced by an "office," are examples of cooperative endeavor.

The hidden significance of "Magic Motorways" lies, of course, in the fact that the whole motor industry is behind it, with the purpose of maintaining the steady and enormous flow of government subsidy, in the form of highway expenditures, which we have been skilfully led to accept as a matter of course. By contrast, every housing project has to fight for what subsidy it gets. If the shelter industries were capable of producing literature such as this, there would be no serious "housing problem."

"Design This Day" is recommended to the layman who would like to make a rounded survey of the many considerations that go into creating a useful shape. The book is concerned not only with "fitness to materials, to purpose, to technique," but with such formal requirements as proportion and balance. There are few of those sententious pronouncements that characterize most popular books on "modern" design; on the contrary there is an almost exaggerated desire to fit the present into the picture of "eternal laws," with the result that the nature of changes now under way is inadequately understood and explained. For example, to the very degree that the "golden mean" (very clearly explained) had meaning to the Greeks because it was a product of their characteristic science (geometry) applied to their characteristic problems (building and sculpture), it means less in an age working with a more abstract mathematics and producing complicated instruments: you do not determine the relations of gears by the golden mean or dynamic symmetry, and this difference, soaking through the whole world of design, is what we need to explore.

Though "Design This Day" will be found very useful as a primer, it offers almost nothing for the more advanced student and ought, in fact, to be entitled "Design Just Yesterday"; such are its viewpoints. Just as Thomas Mann has found that the literary artist can no longer ignore politics, so the industrial designer finds that his problem is funda-

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mentally affected by those who hold political and economic power. No one who has taken the trouble to observe the actual design of *this* day can try, as Teague does, to slur over "führers and commissars" as mere passing nuisances.

In the light of the present moment it seems important to call attention to a book published a year ago and not given the popular attention it deserves. The minute one emphasizes "führers and commissars" as influences over design, it is expected that one will go along with the social diagnoses of Lewis Mumford. On the contrary, the deep value, for real students, of Buckminster Fuller's "Nine Chains to the Moon" is that it departs radically from Mr. Mumford's characteristic attitudes. In warning it must be said that the book places every hurdle of eccentricity in the reader's path. Penetrating these eccentricities and a number of errors, the reader finds an absorbing drama of the current industrial world in fresh terms. Also, he finds constant emphasis on the breaks—called the "random element." In other words, the active worker in fields of design is encouraged by precept and example to hold his mind ready, adaptable, mobile, swift in converting openings. It is a quality of utmost value this minute. The difficulty with a solemn, comprehensive "planning" approach like Mumford's is that it tends to believe that nothing can be done until everything is done. Infatuation with the togetherness of the all makes serious rifts appear to be complete breakdowns. Self-seeking interests always use the rifts; it is time for the generous to absorb the technique of swift conversion. DOUGLAS HASKELL

Ultra-Poetical, Super-Aesthetical

OSCAR WILDE AND THE YELLOW NINETIES. By Frances Winwar. Harper and Brothers. $3.50.

REMINDING us that if our achievement is evanescent our follies are perennial, Miss Winwar's study is an "Only Yesterday" of the nineties. Colorful, acute, if not often more than that, "Oscar Wilde" presents a fine cavalcade of decadence and eruption: the earnest aestheticism of Ruskin, the New Hellenism of Pater, Lily Langtry, whom Wilde, "wishing her classic perfection lighted by some intellectual beam," brought to Newton's lectures on Greek art, Swinburne, Dowson, Beardsley, Hopkins, Solomon, and the rest of that generation who lacked only a Gertrude Stein to pronounce their epitaph. And across the Channel their French counterparts, the Rimbauds, Verlaines, Huysmans, and Moreaus, beside whom, it must be admitted, the English aesthetes are like Dickensian infants.

Piecing together a balanced and honest study of Wilde is in itself a difficult job in view of the diverse accounts of Harris, Douglas, Ross, who often contradict each other and sometimes, as in the case of Lord Douglas, themselves too. Having read her Havelock Ellis, moreover, Miss Winwar brings to her study, if not always complete understanding, greater psychological insight than Wilde's previous biographers. As the popular literary historian of the nineteenth century Miss Winwar needs no further words of introduction, but I'd like to add that this seems to me her best work so far. Her error usually lies in her sympathy. If she, unlike Wilde's everyman, doesn't kill the thing she loves, she

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tends to damage it by an excess of affection. Here, however, allowing her wit and realism fuller play, she makes her work harder and more effective. Tracing Wilde's disordered personality to Speranza, who is probably the oddest and most odious mother in literary chronicles, relating his work to the aesthetic movements of his time, viewing his final tragedy against the Victorian moral dogmas, Miss Winwar has performed a valuable service. Her Wilde emerges as a social being rather than an esoteric excrescence. The incredible Oscar becomes credible.

Perhaps all too credible. For using Wilde thus as the figure of his society, Miss Winwar has in large part taken from him his own gallant conception of himself. The apostle of the new freedom is now merely the symbol of a curious middle-class orgy, first of release and then of repression. This unique and dazzling personage, with his infantile emotions and abstract loves, his black silk stockings, velvet jackets, and publicity mania, this entrepreneur of his own genius, this "ultra-poetical, super-aesthetical, greenery-yallery, Grosvenor Gallery, *je-ne-sais-quoi* young man," becomes almost, as it were, a case history for the analyst, a problem in deviation for the anthropologist, a study in cultural trends for the sociologist. Thus society chains us all, and those who, like Wilde, fled from a hostile and materialistic environment revealed their descent in their denunciations. "Gentlemen," Wilde said on his deathbed, "I fear I am dying beyond my means," but he had in fact lived, as generally we all do, strictly according to them.

MAXWELL GEISMAR

CONTRIBUTORS

McALISTER COLEMAN has long been active in the fight for lower electric-light rates and the extension of public control over the industry.

FRANZ HOELLERING was a journalist in Berlin until Hitler came to power. He is a native of Vienna, scene of the novel of which we print Chapter 9 in this issue. It is to be published by Little, Brown and Company later this year.

LOUISE BOGAN, poetry critic of the *New Yorker*, is the author of a book of verse, "The Sleeping Fury."

LOUIS KRONENBERGER, dramatic editor of *Time*, is a frequent contributor of literary reviews to *The Nation* and other periodicals.

JACQUES BARZUN, assistant professor of history at Columbia University, is the author of "Culture in the Democracy," "Of Human Freedom," and other books.

W. E. WOODWARD is the author of "George Washington," "A New American History," and "Lafayette."

DOUGLAS HASKELL, formerly on the editorial staff of the *Architectural Record*, has written regularly for *The Nation* on housing and architecture.

MAXWELL GEISMAR is a member of the English Department of Sarah Lawrence College.

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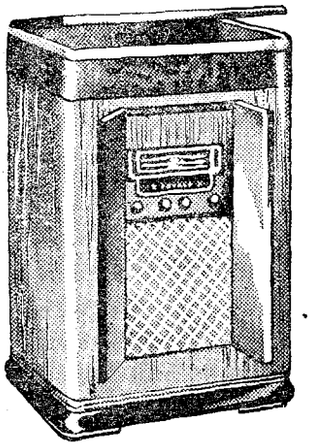

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DRAMA

Two Stars

VINCENT SHEEAN'S comedy drama "An International Incident" (Ethel Barrymore Theater) serves as a starring vehicle for Ethel Barrymore, who recovers her youth and plays a "glamorous" heroine once more. It also serves as a vehicle for the author's opinion on the subject of our current World War and the role which the United States ought not to play in it. Unfortunately these two functions rather get in each other's way, with the result that the piece is neither fish nor fowl nor good red propaganda. A great deal of the available time is spent in permitting the minor characters to agree enthusiastically that the lady impersonated by Miss Barrymore is a paragon of wit, charm, beauty, and *je ne sais quoi*. In what remains, Mr. Sheean can explain only very sketchily indeed that the Allies are not really crusaders for liberty and that, so far as the bulk of citizens are concerned, it behooves them to win the war for their rights within each separate government before concerning themselves greatly over the question which national government is going to dominate Europe. If I understand him aright, he is, in other words, trying to say that the class war is more significant than the present international struggle; but he is, at the same time, so busy keeping Miss Barrymore important that he rather suggests an earnest young radical at a tea party. It is terribly difficult to explain Marx between compliments to the hostess's costume and replies to that all important question "How many lumps?"

Miss Barrymore plays an American-born woman who has lived most of her life in England and been married to various important people. When the play opens, she has just come to America for a lecture tour, and she is confronted at her hotel by a young reporter who tells her that her lectures about the charm of English life are propaganda whether she knows it or not. This young reporter turns out to be a distant cousin from her own home town, and by Act II he is confessing that he is desperately in love with her—principally because he has heard about her "glamour" all his life and she is to him a sort of far-away princess. He cannot persuade her to requite this passion, which, I must say, seems to me a bit too adolescent to be taken seriously in a man old enough to understand world politics, but he does persuade her to visit a picket line with him. She gets bashed over the head by a policeman, confesses that this experience has enabled her to understand what the young man has been talking about, and then returns to England with another old school tie whom she has just agreed to marry. At one time I took it for granted that the story was about to develop into a conflict between love and honor, with the young reporter torn between his passion for the lady and his hatred of her as a "class enemy." But not even this possible connection between the two themes is made, and the glamorous role apparently written for Miss Barrymore continues to seem quite irrelevant to Mr. Sheean's political thesis. In one sense the play is not badly written. The dialogue is literate and reasonably convincing. But it is also rather plodding and pretty consistently dull.

I suspect, moreover, that there is a reason for the failure of the play more fundamental than those suggested by any of the technical deficiencies alluded to. A successful political comedy cannot be written merely by providing a few comic embellishments to an essentially earnest argument. Comedy implies an inclusive attitude toward life as a whole, and Mr. Sheean is certainly not a man to whom a mood of detachment and irony seems appropriate considering the present state of world affairs. Even a born comic writer like Mr. Behrman finds it difficult to maintain the tone of comedy when dealing with certain subject matters. Mr. Sheean's attempt to be light succeeds only in creating an effect of superficiality.

"Lady in Waiting" (Martin Beck Theater) has been dramatized by Margery Sharp from her own very popular novel "The Nutmeg Tree," but it also is first and foremost a "vehicle"—this time for the blonde and obstreperous comedienne Gladys George, who takes a bath on the stage, kicks an English lady aristocrat in the rear, and otherwise enjoys herself. Friends who have read the novel tell me that the story of the adventures of a rowdy but good-hearted American cast by fate into a respectable British circle has been broadened considerably, but the audience plainly enjoys it, and also approves very highly of Miss George's spirited performance. As for myself, I think that I should have liked the latter better if Miss George had been less inclined to ask so plainly for the laughs which, I must confess, she gets.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

RECORDS

WHEN the record reviewer of the *New Statesman and Nation* is not discussing an American orchestral recording that he can call bad, he calls an inferior European recording as bad as an American. From this sort of thing one realizes after a while that the gentleman (he is a Sackville-West) not only has an ear which can perceive the harshness of the recording in Toscanini's set of Mozart's G minor, but has the attitude toward things American with which some Englishmen—even some of the Englishmen who write in a magazine like the *New Statesman and Nation*—keep themselves warm in a cold world, and which prevents this one from crediting America with its occasional successes—chiefly Stokowski's recordings, which reproduce to an amazing degree the rich sound he produces with the Philadelphia Orchestra. But in saying this I am myself not denying the failures, among which I include some of the Boston Symphony's recent recordings: in Beethoven's Second the reverberation made the sound of the orchestra coarse; and even without this reverberation the tone in Haydn's Symphony No. 102 had an extreme and harsh brilliance in place of the sensitive glow that I am accustomed to hearing in Carnegie Hall. In the new set of Debussy's "La Mer" (Victor: M-643, $6.50) the brilliance is not harsh; and having heard the orchestra in Symphony Hall, Boston, a few weeks ago I know that the records reproduce the brilliance one hears in this hall if one sits anywhere but in the extreme rear (and the microphones, of course, are placed in the front). But the sounds which are reproduced with startling clarity and fidelity on the second and third records of the set are heard in a slight haze on the first record, and in some places are seriously distorted; and on my copy of this record the splendor of the midday sun at the end wavers in pitch.

All this is important because it is the refinement and subtlety of his sonorities that make Koussevitzky the outstanding conductor of Debussy's "Nuages," "Fêtes," and "L'après-midi d'un faune." These sonorities are heard in "La Mer"; but this is a much later and much more complex work, and its more complex organization of material involves many more subtleties of pace; and here a surprising thing happens: Koussevitzky is often criticized, and often justly, for in-

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flating slight changes of pace into enormous ones, as he does occasionally in this work; but although Debussy directs that the second movement be played *"dans un rhythme très souple"* and implements this general direction with particular ones like *"Cédez,"* then *"Animez,"* then *"au Mouvement,"* Koussevitzky's pace here and during most of the first part of the movement is almost metronomically rigid. The importance of this is that Debussy's directions represent a purpose in his mind, an effect which he wants and which is not achieved when Koussevitzky does not obey them. And though Koussevitzky does this evidently because he does not sense from the directions what Debussy wants to achieve with them, I, listening, feel an inadequacy at these points. There are a few details of this sort, but only a few; and they are flaws in a highly impressive performance of the work.

The records issued originally by the New York *Post,* which I discussed in the issue of March 2, are now being distributed all over the country through newspapers, schools, and local committees by the National Committee for Music Appreciation, National Press Building, Washington, D. C. The low price has caused enormous quantities of these records to be bought by people who have found the Victor and Columbia prices prohibitive; the enormous quantities have made possible the low price; and what began as a scheme for promoting newspaper circulation has thus developed into a large-quantity-low-price system of record production through which for the first time the potential usefulness of the phonograph record in the diffusion of music in the nation is actually being achieved (the low price of the Decca repressings has been nullified by the poor quality of many of them). The system is one by which social usefulness can be combined with financial profit; but until now Victor and Columbia have preferred the profits without social usefulness of high-price-small-quantity production; and they still do: not only is Victor maintaining its Red Seal prices, but Columbia is stepping up its Masterworks prices to the Victor level.

The social usefulness of the phonograph record is achieved not only by the sale of records at low prices but by the lending of records precisely as books are lent; and the National Committee has taken an important first step in this direction by presenting fifty copies of each of the ten sets in its series to the Newark Public Library for free lending. Newark was selected, says the director of the National Committee, because it is "a typical American city and the center of a North Jersey community which seems to offer an exceptional opportunity for acquainting a large number of persons with this great music." I would say that a community more remote from the large music centers would have offered a better opportunity for the purpose; and I hope that the National Committee's next step will be to extend its generosity to such communities all over the country. And after that there will be another step: to extend the collection beyond the National Committee's present ten sets. This may be a step for the libraries themselves to take: it may become a matter of course for them to use their funds for records as well as books.

B. H. HAGGIN

Prologue to February

[*Continued from Page 479*]

"Comrade Scheller takes the dark view. That is his right. But there are many comrades, with perhaps even greater experience and insight than he, who are convinced we can strengthen the government's democratic wing by passive tolerance. Their aim is the same as Scheller's, only they want to reach it by a bloodless way without the risk of civil war with consequences no one can foresee. They say that the government will recover its reason. Scheller asserts that it has none left. This difference of opinion constitutes our crucial problem. And since no man can be sure which is right and which is wrong, I am persuaded that we must be ready for either eventuality. Such is my solution of our differences."

Now the men at the table applauded. The eyes of the union leader spoke a "very good" as Hippmann reached for the water once more, not for oratorical reasons this time but because his tongue really cleaved to his palate. An unhappy feeling came over him. He was arguing well; he was contending with more shrewdness than he himself approved against a simple worker. But what did words mean to this man Scheller? He yielded not an inch; that he could see.

He went on rapidly. They must prepare for peace, for a Viennese peace against the barbarism of Berlin; they must demonstrate their strength by calmness and unity, and neither provoke nor allow themselves to be provoked into action; they must enlighten public opinion in the great democracies, appeal to the League of Nations, rally the comrades in England and France, not forget that the French Minister of Foreign Affairs was a Socialist. And at the same time rely upon themselves, expect the worst, prepare the general strike as answer to any decisive attack on the republic, and keep the Defense Corps intact in spite of all regulations and arrests. Every confiscated store of arms must be replaced by two new ones. Nerves must be kept steady. Let the enemy come out of his trenches and advance—when it was war, then war! "That is my opinion and, let no one confuse you, that is also the tactic determined upon by the supreme council of the party. Whoever breaks our front, however excellent his motive, has no longer a place in the party. Our solidarity is our strength. But those of another opinion should openly profess it."

The speaker sat down amid the applause of the old guard. Among the opposition no hand stirred. The chairman proposed a resolution exacting the strictest discipline and warning against a repetition of any public action not sanctioned by the governing council. Debate on the question followed at once. It was almost eight o'clock.

Hippmann took another sip of water, but the flat taste of his words remained in his mouth. It had been only another of those speeches of appeasement that he had been delivering month in and month out. In half an hour the resolution would be passed and everybody

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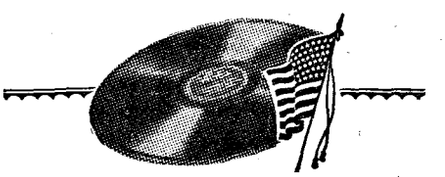

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would go home. How many hundreds of resolutions had he caused to be passed in his life? And to what end? What labor of Sisyphus! Scheller was much better off; he had no doubts. If he could only get out of this stuffy room, into the street, out of the district, and go to strange places, be alone and unknown. Not to have to act. To be permitted to think once more, from the very beginning. How tired he was. . . .

One committeeman after another spoke for the resolution. Then suddenly a railroad worker asked skeptically how the party proposed to educate the members to be ready to fight if it never permitted even a partial action. There was applause from the opposition. Another speaker, a white-collar worker with spectacles, declared, obviously against his will, in a tone of apology, that he had been delegated by his group to demand that the party leadership should "not imitate the shameful example of the German comrades but lead the Austrian proletariat, with arms in their hands, against the enemies of democracy." The opposition applauded more violently, and then the union leader, Müller, asked for the floor.

Müller was an honest man who sent his four children to the very best schools despite his small salary. Bosses and employees equally valued and feared him. There was no getting around his facts and figures and his tough leathery way of insisting on them again and again. Easy victories in wage disputes gave him no pleasure; he was proud of compromises arrived at with difficulty. He knew only facts and the logic of facts. He detested the formulations, half-emotional, half-intellectual, that the politicians used. Such phrases as "with arms in their hands" he could not bear. Only his old Viennese coachman's mustache betrayed his warm nature. His voice clicked like an adding machine.

"I am, thank God, no militarist. But this much I do know, that we have not enough fists and not enough weapons to offer effective resistance to the military power of the government, which, including the army, the police, the gendarmes, and the Home Guard, amounts to at least 100,000 men. I am also told that bombing planes, tanks, artillery, and poison gas are more effective than rusty rifles. No, in a purely military conflict with the government we are lost, even if every Defense Corps man is a hero. We have just one effective weapon, and that is the general strike, if it succeeds. It must be thoroughly prepared, and the provocation for it must be powerful enough to command the adherence of every shop. We union people know how hard it is these days to carry through even a small strike. The fear of unemployment is stronger than the desire for better working conditions. There are more and more strike-breakers. These are facts which even Comrade Scheller cannot deny. There are periods of advance and periods of retreat, even of retreat with losses. We must gain time. Every day of peace is a day won . . ."

The opposition burst out noisily. A young fellow plunged forward to the council table. "And when is an occasion grave enough for a general strike?" he cried. "The suppression of Parliament wasn't enough for you. And of course you can't start a civil war over such trifling issues as the freedom of the press or the Supreme Court. Don't you realize that we're being slowly choked to death? Soon we'll have nothing left to fight for. We must get out of this blind alley into which you have led us. Every day of peace drives us deeper into it."

A second young worker, obviously a Defense Corps man, came forward. "And if we wait until you think that a general strike might succeed we won't have a gun left. They're confiscating arms every day. They know why. They are afraid of us, not of you. That's their tactic: first to disarm us and then to attack us. And you defend them."

"They don't want to fight at all, these capitulators," cried the first of the two young men, shaking his fist at Müller.

Violent protests rose along the table. The chairman rang his bell, but the voices drowned it out. Hippmann sat without stirring, the leader listening to the voices of the people. Müller restored order by leaving his place and going slowly up to the two young men. He stopped just in front of them. Complete silence fell.

"You're too young, both of you, to be able to insult me," he said in a trembling voice, his face pale with rage. "But because you are so young and have as yet no insight of your own, and since some day the responsibility you want to assume so frivolously will be on your shoulders, I'll tell you what would happen if we made mistakes today. It would simply be the end of us—the end of a cultural work of decades and the end of the finest workers' movement in the world. And the end of all those who have built it up through sacrifice after sacrifice. The personal end of all of us."

Hippmann heard Müller returning to his place, every step, it was so still. He felt a motion through the stillness, the turning of many heads, and Hippmann knew without looking up that Scheller was about to speak.

Scheller had risen. "Comrades," he said, as the silence deepened still more, "I do not speak now in the name of the traffic union of my district. Its attitude, on the whole, is not very different from that of other shops. They say that they will join in a general strike if the word is given; I don't know how it will be when we get that far. No one can foretell that today; too many sins have already been committed. Comrade Müller has gone over all the reasons for prudence which he thinks we ought to keep in mind, and I'm quite sure that each of them is sound enough. But in my opinion the battle can no longer be avoided for the simple reason that the enemy is forcing it upon us. It is too late for speech-making. Since we shall have to fight it is better to fight at once, today and not tomorrow, before the Defense Corps is disarmed and all its leaders arrested. Every day of peace is a day lost. I speak in the name of a great group of workers who look upon it as their duty, without further question, to defend the republic. For no one denies any longer that this republic is being betrayed every day by its government. We want simply to carry out the provisions of the party program. Our former confidence in the party leadership is dead. We are afraid it might deliver us up to our enemies without striking a blow, just as the leadership of the German party did with the workers of Germany. This possibility we must and will prevent. I beg Comrade Hippmann to tell the council that our patience is at an end. After the fifteenth of February, that is two weeks from today, we shall no longer consider ourselves subject to its direction unless in the meantime it gives up its tactics of retreat. Yes, the demonstration we organized was a test of strength. It had nothing to do, however, with the government or the police. It was a demonstration against the party leadership. Comrade Hippmann has

In early issues of

THE *Nation*

Meyer Levin's
CITIZENS
Reviewed by Margaret Marshall

Louis MacNeice's
AUTUMN JOURNAL
Reviewed by John Peale Bishop

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called us the advance guard of the workers of Vienna. I promise you we will seek to deserve this name. We will fight, and if necessary, to the last man."

Every hard, unemotional word struck home. Something unalterable sounded in every sentence. Fear, incomprehension, confusion, resignation to a long-expected fate were visible on the faces of the old guard. No one stirred. There was no applause, no sign of agreement or indignation. It was as if the command to war had been given, as if death stood in the room.

"We have listened patiently to a declaration which means nothing less than overt rebellion. Irresponsible comrades whose numbers I do not know wish to impose their will upon the party, to rule by threat its elected officers and in this hour of greatest danger to desert to measures of despair. Comrade Scheller and his friends have put themselves outside the party. I shall move for their exclusion. The whole world is caught up in processes of such colossal change that they will determine the history of man for many generations. It is not for a handful of rash men to imagine that they are wiser than the whole class to which they belong. But we shall repulse also this attack. Traitors will be treated as traitors."

The last sentence cracked like a whip. Scheller stood with lowered head, eyes fixed on space. Slowly he raised it and advanced one step. The silence and the tension were now almost unbearable.

"Comrade Hippmann, who by the way has shown his true face at last, is quite right," he said, emphasizing every word. "We are violating the party laws. We must be excluded. I was ready for that. But I must confess that it hits me harder than I thought it would. I have lived my whole life, since I was able to think, within the party. Just before the war, when I was an apprentice, I entered the youth organization. My whole existence, everything beautiful that raises us above eating and drinking, everything good, has come to me through the party. Only through its teachings I became a human being; I am at home in the party as nowhere else. It hurts, and I can't imagine being outside it . . ."

He interrupted himself. There was still much that he wanted to say, but it was all private. The sad feeling that mounted in him was also not good. More rapidly he continued:

". . . But don't you see that it's no longer important whether we can win or not. The important thing for us is to prove that our ideals are worth our very lives. Otherwise the others would be right. If we die fighting, our ideals will live."

Scheller sat down abruptly, although he did not seem to be through. The men of the old guard were silent as if they were listening to the unsaid as well. There was a pause in which the chairman, holding the little bell firmly in his hand, looked uncertainly from Hippmann to Müller and back again. Finally he asked, "Does anyone else wish to speak?" Evidently no one. He turned to the principal speaker, to allow him to make his final remarks. But Hippmann waved his hand. No final remarks. The resolution condemning the demonstration and breach of discipline was adopted by a large majority.

Hippmann heard the formalities of closing proceed around him while the final remarks he had refused to make worked within him. Why did he not make them? He could have been conciliatory. He could have begun with Scheller's love and reverence and gratitude for the party; he might have expressed a deep sympathy for this feeling, which was so much more than loyalty to an organization, rather the symbol of the profound cultural aspirations of the poor, laboring human being. Starting with that, he could have expanded the order of the day into the infinite. Leaving petty politics behind him, he could have talked about culture, the future, humanity, good and evil, the imperfection of the created being and his innate yearning for perfection—a fountain of beautiful and stimulating mysterious words to refresh these weary men who had come from the machines to consider how best to defend their little freedom. Freedom—he could have pronounced the word in such a fashion that it would have had a single unequivocal meaning, would have meant the whole of life, the very right to breathe and the right to think. He could have got hold of this Scheller with words and shaken his very heart. "Confidence in our sacred cause and courage, but not the courage of desperation." He heard himself saying it, but he was not saying it. A bad day. Why had he let things come to this? Did he want everything, finally, to come to an end?

Then he heard the moving of chairs and the scraping of feet and said, "Goodnight, children," and whispered to the chairman that Scheller was to wait for him. Quite aside from party discipline, premature action was madness. . . . Hippmann's mind worked as he pressed many calloused hands. They liked him, these men. These handclasps were really the single thing that remained of his whole life. And weren't they worth more than everything else? If only the air had not been so stuffy; they should open the windows. When Hippmann looked for Scheller, he was gone. It cut him to the very heart. "He wouldn't wait," someone said.

The chairman, who always thought it an honor to accompany the speaker of a meeting to the tramway or to an automobile, was the first to notice how Hippmann, when he tried to rise, sank slowly forward and swept the bell from the table with his arm. He rushed to his side, supported the fainting man, made him lean back, and opened his tie, collar, and waistcoat. Someone ran into the hall calling for members of the Worker Samaritans, quite forgetting in his excitement that the Socialist Red Cross had long been outlawed.

Hippmann recovered quickly. It was only a passing attack of weakness. He had them often now. Too little sleep, no vacation for years, no relaxation, and always these exciting arguments and explanations in halls filled with foul air. The chairman wanted to get a taxi, but Hippmann declined. Without a word, waving farewell and thanks with a still uncertain gesture, he left the hall. The chairman and secretary followed him softly, at a distance, down the stairs. Then, near a tattered "Merry Widow" poster, they stood and looked silently after the tall man, whose left shoulder was pulled down from years of carrying a heavy briefcase, until he disappeared into the mist of the late winter night.

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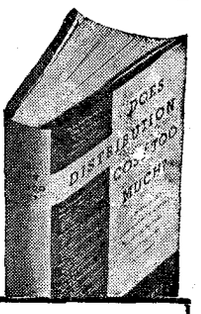
TIME says:

"A survey which, but for the war, might last week have been the biggest news to U. S. business."

—*September 11, 1939*



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Letters to the Editors

"Hoosier Hitler"

Dear Sirs: Milton S. Mayer's article on "Pretty Boy McNutt" in your issue of March 30 is one of the best of many articles on that Presidential aspirant which I have read.

Nevertheless, I think Mr. Mayer, like many other writers, spoils his picture by one serious omission, or perhaps more accurately, a misstatement, concerning McNutt's activities in Terre Haute. The reason I dubbed the Governor a "Hoosier Hitler" was not because he sent troops to Terre Haute at the request of local authorities; most governors would have done the same, although the local authorities greatly exaggerated the danger. The general strike was over in twenty-four hours.

I called McNutt a "Hoosier Hitler" because he extended to Terre Haute and Vigo County exactly the same military rule which Mr. Mayer correctly describes in Sullivan County, and continued that military rule from six to eight months, long after the troops were withdrawn. It was only after I had held a public demonstration meeting that its rigor was relaxed. No man in American life has invented a more skilful way to evade the constitutional guaranties of civil liberty than this. Simply by perpetuating military law after the need for the physical presence of troops had passed, McNutt made himself, through the military, completely the master over the ordinary rights of citizens. If this doesn't justify the title "Hoosier Hitler" I don't know what does.

I think Mr. Mayer also is guilty of playing down Mr. McNutt's imperialism. He is a very skilful advocate of the retention of the Philippines, and that on frankly imperialist grounds—grounds that would make me profoundly distrustful of him in the White House.

NORMAN THOMAS

New York, April 5

A Clarification

Dear Sirs: In my article on Thomas E. Dewey which appeared in *The Nation* for March 16, 1940, I mentioned George Z. Medalie's name, and I find that I may have left an inference that Mr. Medalie was tied up with the Albany beer barons. I thought I had clearly negated this suggestion, but since my mention of Mr. Medalie may be subject to another reading, in deference to him I am happy to state that I never intended to imply such a connection.

JOHN RICHMOND

New York, April 3

Conspiracy in the Northwest

Dear Sirs: The March 23 issue of *The Nation* carried an article by Herbert Lundy called The Laura Law Murder. In my opinion, this piece might far better have been titled Smoke Screens Out of the Northwest, for it blankets the real issues as thoroughly as smoke from a Washington State forest fire.

Laura Law's murder, the raid on the hall of the Finnish Workers' Federation, the numerous acts of violence directed against labor organizers and their sympathizers, the open calls for vigilante action by employer groups, and the failure of the local authorities to maintain law and order are clearly the result of a conspiracy on the part of big business interests in the Northwest to deprive the population of their civil rights.

The situation in Grays Harbor County is not unlike that which recently existed in Bloody Harlan County in Kentucky. But although the Department of Justice has had submitted to it a detailed analysis of the existing situation, it has so far failed to act.

There is now in the process of formation a national committee which will have as its main task the bringing about of an investigation by the Department of Justic. Dick Law and the working people of Grays Harbor County need the support of all those who recognize the necessity for defending our civil liberties. Anything that will tend to lessen that support gives further strength to those who would subvert the Bill of Rights to their own personal interests.

Quite obviously, these same people hope to hide the real facts from the general public by fanning into flame prejudices aroused by the Soviet-Finnish war and the alleged pro-Communist sympathies of some of Dick Law's defenders. It is regrettable that Mr. Lundy has failed to see through these devices or to emphasize the real issues for the benefit of *Nation* readers.

LOUIS P. BIRK,
Vice-President, Modern Age Books

New York, April 4

A "Bertrand Russell Fund"

Dear Sirs: Four years from now, when my son and daughter enter college, I want to realize an old hope that they will profit by association with minds as honest and as rich as Bertrand Russell's. The court decision voiding Mr. Russell's appointment to City College makes me fear that my children may be subjected instead only to association with children handicapped by bigoted parents and a faculty selected by politicians.

I am convinced that the overwhelming majority of sincere and thinking United States citizens concur with the New York Board of Higher Education. But I do not want merely to register a conviction or a sense of outrage. I know that court tests are costly; and that lost liberties are costlier. So I inclose my check for $50 made out to *The Nation,* confident that your readers, under your leadership, will further swell a fund dedicated to Bertrand Russell's reinstatement—or let it read, the reinstatement of American civil rights.

ELY CULBERTSON

New York, April 5

Let's Look at the Record

Dear Sirs: I have never read such mean-minded personal vilification as Lovell Thompson stoops to in his review of Claude Fuess's "Calvin Coolidge" in your issue of March 9. I presume from the tone of the article that Mr. Thompson is a worshiper at the shrine of the Great God Roosevelt. If so, how would he welcome such comment on his hero (post mortem, too) as he bestows on Mr. Coolidge—"runt with a pickle puss." Attack a man on his record if you will but not for his physical characteristics. Mr. Thompson's review, moreover, hardly considered the book, but was merely an attack on the man. Really, this sort of thing isn't worthy of you. Hitherto I have always thought *The Nation* honest and fair.

JOHN E. HERZOG

Bradford, Pa., April 2

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